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ABSTRACT

This document contains information about and from a study of the experiences of 41 adults enrolled in adult basic education/English for speakers of other languages (ABE/ESOL) programs that was conducted to determine what their learning meant to them and to identify strategies for developing a new pluralism in ABE/ESOL classrooms and teaching to multiple "cultures of mind." Chapter 1 situates the study's approach within the context of the ABE/ESOL literature. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the study methodology and the developmental perspective underpinning the study. Chapters 3-9 consist of the following reports that emerged from the study: "Our Developmental Perspective on Adulthood" (Nancy Popp, Kathryn Portnow); "A Developmental View of ESOL Students' Identity Transitions in a Urban Community College" (Deborah Helsing, Maria Broderick, James Hammerman); "'Becoming What I Really Am': Stories of Self-Definition and Self-Expansion in an Even Start ABE/ESOL Family Literacy Program: A Developmental Perspective" (Kathryn Portnow, Ann Diamond, Katie Pakos Rimer); "'Not I Alone': The Power of Adult Learning in the Polaroid Cohort" (Eleanor Drago-Severson, Jennifer Garvey Berger); "'We're Trying to Get Ahead': A Developmental View of Changes in Polaroid Learners' Conceptions of Their Motivations for Learning, Expectations of Teachers, and Relationship to Work" (Eleanor Drago-Severson); "Competence as a Developmental Process" (Nancy Popp, Lisa Boes); and "Towards Meaning-Centered Considerations of Policy and

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Practice: Summary and Implications." Most chapters contain substantial bibliographies. A standardized measures analysis report and developmental skill matrices are appended. (MN)

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TOWARD A NEW PLURALISM IN ABE/ESOL CLASSROOMS: TEACHING TO MULTIPLE "CULTURES OF MIND"

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contributing not only to data collection but to data analysis and/or the broader conceptualizing of the findings: Jennifer Berger, Ann Diamond, James Hammerman, Katie Pakos Rimer, and Maricel Santos.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

How do ABE/ESOL programs shape adult learners, and how do adult learners, in turn, shape their programs? Beyond the acquisition of important skills (such as greater fluency in the English language) what are the bigger internal meanings for adults of participating in ABE/ESOL learning? And how do the systematic ways adults are making meaning when they enter their programs affect how they will best learn in them, and what they will most need from them?

As adult developmental psychologists, we carefully followed for a year or more the inner experiences of 41 ABE/ESOL learners from all over the world. They were enrolled in three different U.S. programs oriented to greater English language fluency and improved effectiveness in learners' roles as parents, workers, or students.

In the process, we found ourselves increasingly drawn into two simultaneous worlds of inspiring aspiration: a world of courageous learners and their dedicated teachers, on the one hand; and, on the other, a scholarly world of passionate contributors to a fast-developing ABE/ESOL literature filled with challenging questions, rich debates, and direct requests for more colleagues to join in the good work. Our own hope is that what we have discovered in the first world may be of some use to the second for the continuing benefit of both.

In this first chapter, we give you our understanding of several key questions, pleas, and debates in the ABE/ESOL literature which we believe our study engages. We introduce you to the three settings in which we were welcomed and to the learners we followed. Primarily, we seek to provide here a picture of **a new bridge** between these two worlds which our own perspective and experience led us to discover. We begin to suggest the kinds of benefits to practitioners we think may result from a walk along this bridge. In the chapters ahead we are going to invite you to join us on this walk—a long, Golden Gate-sized walk, to be sure!—and, in the concluding chapter, we try to sum up what seem to us the practical consequences of the walk, both for teachers' choices in the classroom and for new understandings of a number of ongoing debates in the ABE/ESOL literature.

Situating Our Approach In The ABE/ESOL Literature

Contributors to the ABE and ESOL literatures seem continuously to call for more in-depth, qualitative accounts of the inner experiences of adult learners to balance equally valuable but perhaps over-represented quantitative, demographic, and large-sample summary approaches (Skilton-Sylvester and Carlo, 1998; Macias, 1986; Rockhill, 1982; Valentine, 1990; Hunter and Harman, 1979). Macias (1986), for example, contrasts "national data sets" with "local and qualitative research," suggesting that "both are needed, and each can contribute answers to questions that the other cannot" (p. 19). Malicky and Norman (1996) lament that there is too little research "focus[ing] on the lives of adult literacy learners or on their perceptions of changes in their lives as they participate in literacy programs" (p. 3). Our study, which re-interviews each learner open-endedly on several occasions over the course of a year or more, certainly hopes to be responsive to these felt needs for richer accounts of learners' broader spheres of living and their internal experiencing.

We are interested, however, in the way several contributors to the field make clear that what is needed is not merely more qualitative, thickly descriptive case accounts in simple contrast to quantitative, large sample approaches, but qualitative approaches which are not so markedly framed from the perspective of either the ABE/ESOL "mission," in general, or the intentions and purposes of the specific ABE/ESOL program in which the learner is enrolled. Wiley (1993), for example, writes about the fact that many studies, even those which are qualitative in nature, tend "to be framed from the expectations of the receiving society" (p. 6). The learner's perspective tends to be considered *in light of* a program's expectations, or the U.S. host society's definitions of the learner's needs, rather than considering the perspectives of learners as *they* would define their own experiences, their own hopes, their own needs.

This call for attention to the *learner's meanings* as the fundamental starting point is picked up even more directly by Lytle and her colleagues (Lytle, 1991; Lytle and Schultz, 1990) who are themselves at work on, and calling others to help develop, a literature of "adults' *own* evolving conceptual frameworks or theories about language, literacy, teaching, and learning" (emphasis hers) (Lytle, 1991; p. 120). Lytle explicitly urges researchers and practitioners to draw on the "considerable literature of theory and research on children, adolescents, and adults in the areas of meta-cognition . . . and social-cognition" among others (p. 120). "Adults' beliefs," she says,

> may function as the core or critical dimension in their movement toward enhanced literacy. As beliefs are articulated and sometimes restructured through interactions with teachers, texts, and other learners, the other dimensions of development—adults' practices, processes, goals and plans—begin to reflect, and in turn, to inform these changes. Although these developmental processes appear to be reciprocal and recursive, there is evidence that beliefs may be a primary source or anchor for other dimensions of growth. (p. 121)

Working in a longstanding theoretical and methodological tradition that follows closely the *development* of individuals' ways of *constructing* their inner and outer experience (Kohlberg, 1969; Perry, 1970; Gilligan, 1982; Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000; Basseches, 1984; Kitchener and King, 1994; Baxter-Magolda, 1992; Belenky, et al., 1986), we represent precisely one of the intellectual approaches Lytle urges be joined to the study of adult literacy. Our study involves meticulous attention to both the *meaning-constitutive* and potentially *transformable* nature of adult learners' *beliefs*—how these shape a field of action and experience, constituting a lens through which the learner looks out at the world within and beyond the classroom; and how that lens can potentially change over time, reconstituting the field of action and experience. The approach we bring to our study of adult learners' experience is thus radically drawn from the learners' perspective (rather than that of the host nation or literacy program), and fundamentally anchored in the constitutive nature of adult learners' beliefs, as Lytle calls for.

Our approach is referred to as "constructive-developmental" because it considers the way a persons' beliefs *construct* the reality in which they live, *and* the way these beliefs can change or *develop* over time. Our work is thus an extension of the tradition of Jean Piaget who helped us to see each *child* as a kind of philosopher (1959)—someone whose beliefs and understandings arose from a distinctive way of knowing, with a coherence, wholeness, and dignity all its own. In an identical way, our approach looks at each *adult* learner in our study—and by extension, each adult learner in *any* ABE/ESOL classroom—as a kind of philosopher. **What value might there be in better understanding the "philosophies" ABE/ESOL learners bring into our classrooms?** This is a fundamental question in our study.

In the third chapter of this monograph we try to acquaint the reader with the look and feel of a number of qualitatively different "philosophies" or ways of knowing[1] to which our own research and earlier research suggests adult learners may be partial when they enter an ABE/ESOL classroom. This research also suggests that our relationship to our ways of knowing are not at all casual. We do not tend to take them on and off from one day to the next like sweaters from a drawer. Our ways of knowing may feel more to us like the way we *are* rather than something we *have*; and the world we construct through our way of knowing (including the learning and teaching world of the classroom) may seem to us less the way things *look to us*, and more like the way things *are*. Learning new information or skills can be difficult, and when it is accomplished we may feel like the person we know ourselves to be knows more, has more capabilities, greater interior and exterior access. But changing our fundamental way of knowing—developing a whole new

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[1] The important work of Belenky et al., especially *Women's Ways of Knowing* (1986), has achieved such understandable prominence in the field of adult education, that it may be useful to point out that we are using the term "ways of knowing" in its literal and ordinary sense here; we are not referring to their specific taxonomy. A *way of* knowing (as distinct from *something* that is known, a *product* of knowing) is what in philosophy is called an *epistemology*. The underlying structure of an epistemology is the subject-object relationship—what can this way of knowing reflect upon, look at, have perspective on ("object")? What is it embedded in, attached to, identified with ("subject")? The distinctly different meaning-systems defined in our study are identifiable as distinctly different ways of organizing the subject-object relationship; i.e., they are literally different "ways of knowing."

"philosophy"—can be qualitatively even more difficult; it can feel less like the self we know has taken on greater capabilities and more like the self we *knew* has changed in some fundamental way. This is "constructive-development." We have undergone a *development* in the fundamental way we *construct* experience.

Anyone who has spent any time with children is familiar with such changes in the young. A typical ten year old is not just physically bigger than a typical four year old; the ten year old is more complex. Four year olds are more captive of their impulses; ten year olds can sit still. Four year olds do not distinguish between fantasy and reality; when a ten year old is imagining himself flying he knows he is "pretending." Four year olds live in the moment; ten year olds begin to think about consequences, and what will happen next. The differences between childhood and adolescence are also well known. We realize now that teenagers do not just have different hormones and biochemistry from children. They gradually begin to construct a whole different way of knowing.

But how much do we know about the differing unconscious "philosophies" *adults* tend to construct? For more than 40 years teachers of the young have considered the importance of paying close attention to their students' ways of knowing or making meaning. It has been understood and accepted that learning goes on, after all, as Piaget was fond of saying, "in the home of" the learner, not in the home of the teacher. Even if the teacher's purpose is "to lead out" from that home (the literal meaning of "educate") the teacher must still know from *where* he or she is trying to lead the student. For forty years teachers have thought about their students' "homes"—if their students were children and youth. *But we have barely begun to think about our students' "homes" when our students are adults.* It is our hope that this long monograph can be a resource for doing just that in the world of ABE/ESOL learning.

If we, the authors of this study, believe that our constructive-developmental perspective may help to better understand teaching ABE/ESOL learners, we also hasten to acknowledge that the ABE/ESOL learners we were privileged to study helped us in turn to modify our own perspective. ABE/ESOL learners inevitably have a precious relationship to at least two kinds of "home"—one's personal philosophy or way of knowing, in which all learning goes on, and from which one might be tempted to venture out; but also the homeland of a familiar culture one is both leaving and in some way carrying forward into the new home. As our study progressed, we came to feel that processes of acculturation and leaving the "home" of one's native country were so powerful a part of the mental landscape of the learners we studied that our central category for observation—the learner's "way of knowing" or "implicit philosophy"—was best considered a kind of "culture of mind." That is, in addition to the many forms of diversity that may be obviously present in an ABE/ESOL classroom, and which good teachers do their best to recognize and include—differences of gender, age, race, cultural origin—our study suggests the importance of a less obvious difference, namely different ways of knowing, which may also be precious to learners, also in need of the teacher's recognition, and which inevitably color the learners' ways of working out the processes of leaving a familiar culture for an unfamiliar one. **What would it mean to create a new conception of the "resource-rich classroom"—one that was filled with ways of connecting well to the inevitable *diversity* of "cultures of mind" which will populate any ABE/ESOL classroom?** This is another fundamental question in our study.

The idea of "connecting well" reflects another critical dimension of our constructive-developmental approach—namely, that the exercise and transformation of our ways of knowing always go on in some *context*. The British psychologist, D. W. Winnicott, was the first to coin the term, "holding environment," in reference to the psychosocial surround that must support the healthy development of the infant (1965). Winnicott himself raised the question of whether the need for a good "holding environment" was an idea exclusively responsive to the fragility and vulnerability of infancy, or whether there might be a need for successively reconfigured holding environments at each new stage of development. Others, notably Erikson (1968) and Kegan (1982), have since worked out conceptions of the holding environment *throughout the lifespan*.

Kegan identifies three crucial functions of a holding environment, at least two of which have obvious relevance for thinking about an ABE/ESOL classroom: First, a good holding environment must "hold well"—i.e., it must understand, accept, and acknowledge the way the person understands; it must take the person *where he or she is*, without disappointment or impatience. Secondly, it must, when the time is right, "let go"—i.e., it must support the person's need for a gradual psychological separation from, and disidentification with, the holding environment with which it is, for a time, inevitably fused. Third, if possible, it should "stick around"—i.e., it should be available, after differentiation, to be re-known, or newly connected with according to new terms consistent with the ways the developing person has grown and changed.

This third characteristic—a wholesome feature of long-term relationships in which people inevitably grow and change—may be harder to provide in the shorter-term context of ABE/ESOL enrollment; but the first two characteristics essentially amount to a fresh perspective on the need for any classroom to be both a "high-support" and "high-challenge" environment. Too much of the first without the second may be comfortable but insufficiently stimulating. Too much of the second without the first generates defensive resistance and withdrawal. Our approach suggests that every ABE/ESOL classroom is a collection of individual makers of meaning, and that ABE/ESOL learning is, in one way or another, a constructive-developmental *event*—i.e., the adult's chances for a powerful learning experience depend on proper supports to exercising, and even possibly to transforming, the way one makes meaning. **How might a better understanding of the differing "ways of knowing" our students bring into the classroom enhance our chances to connect well with them?**

In addition to all the obvious gains that may be possible by better understanding the mental home of each individual adult learner, it became apparent to us, as we were drawn further in to the ABE/ESOL literature, that our "cultures of mind" approach might shed new light on a number of especially prominent areas of exploration and debate, more generally:

- **Motivation to Learn.** We detect in the literature a growing restlessness with the way ABE/ESOL participants' *motivations to learn* are conceptualized. Peirce (1995), for example, regards the widespread distinction between "instrumental" and "integrative" motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1972) as too static and unidimensional (Ullman, 1997). ***How can our "cultures of mind" approach help us see a wide variety of qualitatively different ways of knowing which may lie behind a learner's motivation to, for example, secure a new job (an example of the "instrumental" stance) or, for example, become more a part of the PTA at one's children's school (an example of the "integrative" stance)?*** The literature suggests that despite the conceptually neat distinction between these kinds of motivations, real learners trouble this neatness by demonstrating both kinds of motives. ***How can a "cultures of mind" approach help us to see the consistency in a given person's "motive mix"?***

- **Classroom Community.** There is a growing recognition in the literature that, even for adults, positive relationships between the student and teacher, and among fellow students are important to learning (Chevalier, 1994; Atwell, 1987; Brookfield, 1991; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1991; Heard, 1989; Meyers and Erdmann, 1985; Wrigley and Guth, 1992; Kegan, 2000). But what constitutes "positiveness" is different for different learners. It can be puzzling for well-intentioned teachers, for example, to find that the same behaviors which leave one student feeling well-attended-to leave another feeling abandoned. A student who wants to be helpful to her fellow learners can find that some people feel supported and others condescended to by the identical behaviors on her part. ***How can a "cultures of mind" approach help us better understand***

the differing criteria students will bring to their constructions of supportiveness or trustworthiness in a teacher? Within one's cohort of fellow learners?

- **Classroom Pedagogy.** Do all adult learners prefer and benefit from student-centered, teacher-as-coach, "democratic" classroom designs? Sometimes the literature seems almost to suggest that a capacity and appetite for these kinds of pedagogical designs automatically comes along with the "condition" of adulthood (Knowles, 1975; Grow, 1991; Mezirow, 1981). The implication is that if you are going to be an effective teacher of grown-ups you must eschew the teacher-centered, teacher-as-expert, "authoritarian" designs which if ever appropriate are only so for children and youth. Similarly, discussions about "cooperative," vs. "collaborative," vs. "traditional teacher transmission" models (Hamilton, 1994; Flannery, 1994; Eble and Noonan, 1983) tend to frame the possibilities in terms either of philosophical differences and ideological preferences among educators, on the one hand, or unresearched assumptions about "how the adult mind works," on the other. ***But is it possible the question of optimal classroom teaching designs should not be one of "either/or," but optimal matches to the learner's current way of knowing? Can a "cultures of mind" approach help us create a more "plural" set of teaching designs in any one classroom?***

- **Self Re-creation.** A line of exploration in the literacy literature that is especially fascinating to us attends to the way that literacy learning and the life circumstances that occasion it (e.g., immigration) often involve a process of self-creation (Rouse, 1995; Peirce, 1995; McKay and Wong, 1996; Huizenja and Weinstein-Shr, 1996; Munoz, 1995; Ullman, 1997). The learner may literally "find herself" in a new world.

  > The act of immigrating to a new country can profoundly affect a person's social identity. In fact, some people experience this change more as an act of re-creation than as a temporary process of readjustment. For example, it might necessitate re-creating one's potential role because one's child can more quickly acquire the new language and perform tasks such as talking with a landlord or paying bills. It might mean a shift in one's collective identity, so that being from the coastal village of Bucay in Ecuador is overshadowed by becoming or being seen as "Latin American." These transformations are complex and continual, redefining all aspects of self. (Ullman, 1997)

  This line of exploration is interested in how teachers, in Ullman's words, "might support students in the process of self-creation" (p. 1). ***How can a***

"cultures of mind" approach help us to see the ways a learner's lens filters the process of self re-creation? And how, for some learners, the filters themselves may change, enabling and necessitating new forms of self re-creation?

- **The Power of Context/Context of Power.** Many researchers discuss the importance of attending more explicitly to the reality-shaping dimension of the social context of ABE and ESOL learning (McKay and Wong, 1996; Ullman, 1997; Peirce, 1995; Weinstein-Shr, 1995). These researchers highlight the relationships between the role of the student, speaking, sense of one's personal "voice," and language on the one hand, and mediated attributions, structural inequality, and unequal power, on the other.

  In her study of immigrant women learning English in Canada, Peirce (1995) found that the women sometimes had ambivalent feelings about speaking English. This hesitation seemed to come from their resistance to the identities others were creating for them, not from lack of motivation (Ullman, 1997). ***How can a "cultures of mind" approach to the study of ABE/ESOL learning help us better understand learners' differing experiences of these power dimensions? Their differing constructions of social attributions? Their differing vulnerabilities to structural inequalities?*** For example, structural inequalities create obstacles for everyone who is placed on the less powerful side of the equation; but there is a big difference between the internalization of these obstacles (where we come to feel they reflect in some way our own unworthiness) and the experience of them as largely external.

- **The Purpose and Outcome of ABE/ESOL Learning**. Goals for ABE/ESOL programs range from helping adults to become better prepared to join and/or participate in the work force or civic life, to increasing skill development, to personal empowerment, to engaging in social and political change (Evers, Rush, and Berdrow, 1998). While increasing "competence" is the hoped-for outcome of any adult learning program, with so varied an assortment of favored goals, "competence" comes to mean a host of different things (Green, 1995; Chappell, 1996; Ecclestone, 1997; Hyland, 1994; Kerka, 1998). And yet, whether one's favored goals orient to the acquisition of basic skills or to the personal growth of the learner; whether goals are first derived from a consideration of academic disciplines that need to be mastered or from consideration of the adult's real-life demands, the fact remains that whatever learning one seeks to promote must go on in the mental home of the learner. ***How can***

> ***a "cultures of mind" approach help us better to engage the learner's "mental home," whether our goal is, for example, to increase the accessible skill base within that home, or for example, to facilitate the learner's move to a qualitatively more expansive and complex mental home?***

Our study has been influenced by our collaboration with Sondra Stein and "Equipped for the Future" (EFF), a National Institute for Literacy initiative with a new approach to conceiving the purposes and assessing the outcomes of adult basic education:

> The Equipped for the Future Standards for Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning have been developed to answer a complex question: What do adults need to know and be able to do in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities as workers, parents and family members, and citizens and community members? (Stein, 2000, p.1)

Our study shares the philosophical view of EFF in "conceptualizing adult literacy as something bigger than the acquisition of basic skills" (Popp, Portnow, Broderick, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 1998, p.25), and in defining competence within the context of the individual adult learner's life demands. More particularly, the "something bigger" is the meaning-making person "behind the skills, " the person possessed of generative mental capacities that frame an understanding of what behaviors are called for and need to be exercised. And the adult learner's "life demands," more particularly, can be looked at in the context of his or her many social roles. Like EFF, we have been interested (Kegan, 1994), in the "hidden curriculum" that inheres in each of the frequented social roles common to most adult lives: In their private lives—e.g., parenting, partnering—and in their public lives—e.g., work, citizenship—adults take up a number of roles each of which has built into it a set of largely unrecognized mental tasks that must be solved satisfactorily in order to succeed in the role. EFF has identified a number of these role-related tasks.

Our work raises the specific question of whether the ways people will understand and carry out the tasks of a given social role are importantly influenced by their more general "way of knowing" or "culture of mind. " In Chapter Six we look at the tasks EFF identifies in various social roles through the lens we develop in the preceding chapters—i.e., **What do the same tasks look like from the perspectives of differing "cultures of mind?"** This is a question with myriad implications for ABE/ESOL teachers, as discussed in our last chapter—e.g., **With regard to the performance of any role-related task, how well matched are the teacher's expectations with the current capacity of the adult learner's current "culture of mind?" What is the appropriate, next-more-complex way in which a given task might be better understood and performed by the learner, toward which the teacher can appropriately hope to support the learner's progress?**

The Learning Opportunity In Our Study

By now we have posed a great many questions, all suggesting that attention to a new variable, "culture of mind" may bring us some fresh help on a variety of learning and teaching fronts in the ABE/ESOL world. In response to these questions you may have developed a few questions of your own. We can imagine both polite and less polite forms of these questions.

A polite form might go something like this: Alright then, how can I gain a greater understanding of this new dimension—adult learners' systemic ways of knowing—as it expresses itself in the real particulars of the learning and teaching enterprise, or the real demands of adults' lives outside the classroom? How can I learn about "ways of knowing" in action?

Less polite forms might go something like this: How can I test my own skepticism about this new dimension? How powerful a dimension is it really, in comparison, for example, to more familiar differencing dimensions like gender, age, cultural origin? In the midst of all those differences that so characterize the ABE/ESOL classroom, am I really likely to be impressed by what is shared among people of different ages, genders, and cultural origins who just happen to be making use of the same "way of knowing"? How consistent, for any one person, is a "way of knowing" anyway? Persons' "culture," after all, is their culture when they are both in and out of the classroom, when they are at work, and when they are at home with their families. Is "culture of mind" as cohering a variable? Does the way I see my students making sense as a learner in my classroom really have much to do with the way they understand their work in a factory or their role as a parent?

We intend our study to be an opportunity for the reader to pursue here both sets of questions—How do I learn about "cultures of mind" in action? How do I decide how important this variable is? In many respects these were our own questions as well, as we took a psychological perspective familiar to us into a world that was unfamiliar to us. The constructive-developmental perspective has been brought to a great variety of investigations, but we are unaware of any previous studies from this perspective of ABE/ESOL learning, or of adults so varied in cultural origins or socio-economic circumstances.

Before the first word of this study was written, it was designed to create the opportunity to learn answers to the polite and less-polite questions above. We wanted to study ABE/ESOL learners in the context of a variety of real-life social roles. We wanted the adults whose learning experiences we would study to be enrolled in programs that seemed to look to educate and not just to train—i.e., exemplary programs, from our point of view—to have the best chance to engage the broader, generative capacities behind behaviors. We wanted the opportunity to follow a relatively small group of learners closely for a substantial period of time—to really get to know them; to gather a lot of "thick" data from a relatively small group rather than a lot of "thin" data from a very large group; to provide the learners in our study the opportunity to show us their ways of knowing in rich detail; and to follow them long enough that we might have some chance to see how those ways of knowing may, for some learners, actually change.

The nature of our actual sample and cooperating ABE/ESOL programs in many respects exceeded even our own ambitious list of wishes. Three sites—each attending to ABE/ESOL learning in the context of a specific adult role, and each seeking to engage the whole learner—generously agreed to participate in our study, and each stuck with us throughout the whole study, making many hours of interviewing time available in their program schedules over the course of the 10 to 14 months we studied learners in each site. The three sites were a high-school diploma program oriented especially to the work role, staffed by the Continuing Education Institute of Watertown, Massachusetts, and provided to factory workers at the Norwood, Massachusetts plant of the Polaroid Corporation; a Massachusetts Even Start program oriented especially to family literacy; and a pre-enrollment program oriented especially to the role of higher education student, offered by the Bunker Hill Community College of Charlestown, Massachusetts. (A full description of each site can be found in the chapters ahead.)

A total of 41 learners across the three sites participated in the complete study, making time available on three (and, at one site, four) separate occasions for tape-recorded, open-ended qualitative interviews, structured exercises, paper-and-pencil quantitative measures, and classroom observations. Each visit lasted several hours and permitted us to gather data on a wealth of questions about participants' experience of a variety of aspects of the learning and teaching enterprise: e.g., What are your purposes in pursuing this learning? What, in your view, makes a person a good teacher? What effect is your learning having on your work, or in your relationship with your child, or in your role as a prospective college student? Revisiting the same participant over the course of a year or more also allowed us to ask of the data (as well as the participant): Are there changes over time in the learner's views on these kinds of matters? (A full account of our research method is presented in Chapter Two.)

The full sample of 41 learners was characterized by rich diversities and intriguing commonalities. The learners were men and women; people in their early 20s to midlife and from every part of the world; adults whose prior schooling experiences were negative and marked by shame and failure, and those whose prior experiences were positive and marked by pride and success. At the same time, within each site there was an interesting concentration of learners around a given age and life-phase. The learners at the Bunker Hill Community College site were mostly unmarried young adults in their 20s; the learners at the Even Start site were mostly in their 30s and parents of young children; and the learners at the Polaroid plant were frequently midlife adults, men and women in their 40s and the parents of older children. If ever one wanted to explore a sufficiently diverse group of adults to test the strength of a new variable like "culture of mind"—Can it suggest unrecognized *commonalities* that apply across such apparently *different* people? Can it make apparent unrecognized *distinctions* among people who seem to be so *similar*?—this group of adults surely provides an outstanding opportunity to do just that! (A full account of the characteristics of our sample of adult learners will be found in the chapters ahead.)

One valuable feature of our study for which we can take no credit is the unexpectedly resourceful opportunity the settings provided for exploring the importance to the adult learner of participation in a learner cohort. It is now commonplace in the adult learning literature in general to assert that the need for a strong connection to a group of fellow learners is less important for adults than it is for youth who are in the process of separating from their families of origin and have not yet created a new community of affiliation and identification. Adults, who in most cases have already created social networks around their families and friends and fellow workers, can be presumed, so the conventional wisdom goes, to be less in need of such community. In the ABE/ESOL literature, more specifically, there is the further suggestion that one-on-one coaching or training may be superior to classroom learning. But in our study, across all three of our research sites, adults consistently made reference to the importance to them of an unusually close-knit, reliable, common-purpose group ("members of a family," "part of a community," "fellow warriors"). Thus we have the opportunity here to learn how group learning was important and to raise questions about these accepted wisdoms as to the presumed unimportance or ineffectiveness of this aspect of adult learning.

At the same time, the three sites provide fascinating contrasts in their particular cohort "designs." At one setting learners entered and exited the program at their own distinct times. At another, every learner began the program at the same time, all worked toward a common purpose, and all exited the program at the same time. Still another group began with a common starting point, built a strong cohort, and then, in the middle of the year, disbursed into a wider population of learners. In the pages ahead we thus also have the opportunity to learn about the effects of these differing cohort design features. How did learners make sense of these cohort experiences and how well do different designs serve different ways of knowing?

This monograph is organized in the following fashion: In Chapter Two we present our research method. In Chapter Three we acquaint you with the look and feel of a number of qualitatively different ways of knowing in adulthood, generally, and as they may make sense of aspects of teaching and learning, in particular. The following four chapters explore our three research sites—first the student-oriented program at Bunker Hill Community College; then the parent-oriented program at Even Start; and finally two chapters on the work-oriented program at Polaroid. After these chapters we explicitly address issues of role-related competence and our collaboration with Equipped for the Future. The last chapter sums up our findings and their implications for ABE/ESOL teaching and program planning. Two appendices then follow, reviewing, respectively, our quantitative findings and developmentally oriented competency charts identifying the way similar tasks might be performed within differing "cultures of mind."

We now heartily invite you into the various learning opportunities of this study. If ABE/ESOL classrooms inevitably present teachers with a rich mix of durable ways of knowing—not mere "habits of mind" but veritable "cultures of mind," each possessed of a systemic dignity, each engendering the learner's deep loyalties—our study may constitute a kind of encyclopedia for the development of a new kind of resource-rich classroom—one that includes a wide range of responses to a *variety* of adult ways of knowing.

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CHAPTER TWO

Research Method

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

We began our research with the hope of employing our developmental perspective to inform and be informed by the world of ABE/ESOL learners' experiences in three programs aimed at supporting adult learning and the development of enhanced role competency. As developmental psychologists and educators, we embarked on a process-based research study—our intention was to carefully track learners' experiences over time. Like prior developmental studies of transformational learning in adulthood, we employed a variety of research methods to deeply examine participants' internal or psychological processes of change. Our project built on techniques for conducting developmental case analyses of transformational learning developed and validated by Selman & Schultz (1990).

Specifically, our approach utilized a combination of structured and open-ended qualitative interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations to understand and explicate the learners' experiences of their programs over time. Additionally, we administered standard survey measures of stress, satisfaction with life, and self-efficacy, which helped us to assess participants' thinking at program start and completion (i.e., pre- and post- intervention levels). Together, these approaches enabled us to explore and thickly describe participants' learning experiences and their experiences of change in themselves over the course of their ABE/ESOL programs. In this chapter, we describe the three research sites, our methods of data collection, the instruments we administered, and our methods of data analysis. We offer our study's research methods as a resource for researchers and practitioners with the hope that they serve as a useful map toward better understanding ABE/ESOL learners' experiences in such programs.

Site and Participant Selection

In 1997, we identified three Adult Basic Education (ABE/ESOL) settings running programs widely considered to be best practice (see, e.g., Harbison & Kegan, 1999). Best practice programs are commonly celebrated because they use effective methods for achieving excellent and targeted results and because such model programs often set benchmarks or standards for other programs to emulate (Hammer & Champy, 1993). In our case, we selected these programs because their designs, in part, allowed for long-term growth in students' understanding, thereby allowing us to examine the developmental dimensions of transformational learning.

In addition to having an established history of practices focused on learner-centered curriculum, each of these programs intentionally incorporated a variety of supports and challenges to facilitate adult learning. We examined how program design, teacher practice, learner expectations, and curricula might support and challenge learners with different ways of knowing and possibly lead to transformation. The selected programs also incorporated practices and curriculum that were aimed at supporting the enhancement of adults' specific role competency in one of three social roles: student, parent, or worker. Through our methodology, we were able to trace the ways in which participants, over time, reported program learning as helping them to perform specific social roles differently.

All adults enrolled in the three programs were invited to participate in our research (their participation was voluntary). At each site, all participants initially agreed to participate in our research. We began our study with 58 participants (17 from the community college site, 22 from the family literacy site, and 19 from the workplace site); however, during the course of the research, 17 participants (across settings) either withdrew or temporarily stopped out of their programs for a variety of reasons. We were able to conduct what we refer to as non-completer interviews with several of these participants after the programs ended for the year.

During 1998-99, we carefully followed the inner experiences of a group of 41 ABE/ESOL learners from all over the world, enrolled in three different U.S. programs where the explicit program goal was either to prepare learners for enrollment in a GED program or to help students learn English for speakers of other languages (i.e., the family literacy site); or to prepare learners for entry into academic coursework at the college level (i.e., the community college site); or to earn a high school diploma (i.e., the workplace site). This sample was diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, age, past educational experiences, and social roles (please see Appendix A for sample demographics). The great majority of the participants were non-native English speakers, from a lower socioeconomic background. We will briefly describe each site (fuller descriptions appear in later chapters).

The Bunker Hill Community College Site

In the Summer of 1998 we negotiated a research relationship with Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) in Charlestown, Massachusetts. During the 1998-99 academic year, we researched how a group of recently immigrated young adults, mostly in their late teens or early 20s, experienced a pilot program aimed at helping them become better prepared for academic coursework in college. These learners were enrolled in the same two classes at BHCC during their first semester (an ESOL class and an introductory psychology class designed for ESOL learners). During the second semester, the group disbanded, and each learner independently selected his or her own courses from the full range of academic courses available at BHCC. As part of this program, all learners also engaged in coursework at BHCC's Self-Directed Learning Center.

As at our other two sites, adults enrolled in this program were primarily from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and non-native English speakers. Unlike at our other two sites, these students had already earned a high school diploma and were matriculating for an Associate's degree or a certificate of study. Our interest was in learning how participation in this program influenced how these participants conceived their roles as students.

The Even Start Family Literacy Site

We negotiated a research relationship with the Even Start Family Literacy Program in Massachusetts during the Summer of 1998. To enroll in this program, participants needed to be from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. At this site, we carefully followed one group of parents who were members of a pre-GED class and another parent group enrolled in an ESOL class from the Fall of 1998 through July 1999. These parents, who were mostly in their 30s, emigrated from various countries and had been living in the United States for an average of approximately nine years. Parents in this program also had at least one child who attended the family literacy program. Enrolled parents participated in a five-component program which includes: 1) a pre-GED or ESOL class, 2) a class for their child or children, 3) home visits from site administrators, 4) parent and child time meetings, and 5) parent discussion groups where the two cohorts of adults (ESOL and pre-GED) came together for weekly discussions. Our interest was in learning how participation in this family literacy program affected the ways in which these adults conceived and enacted their roles as parents.

The Polaroid Workplace Site

The Polaroid Corporation of Waltham, Massachusetts, our workplace site, was selected in the Fall of 1997. At this site we studied a group of workers who participated in a 14 month Adult Diploma Program designed and delivered by the Continuing Education Institute (CEI) of Watertown, Massachusetts. Most of these workers were in their 30s and 40s, had lived in the U.S. for more than

20 years, were married, and had children. We began data collection in March 1998 and completed it in June 1999. All adults enrolled in CEI's Adult Diploma Program took five classes: mathematics, writing/English, U.S. history, science, and life employment workshop. Our interest was in learning how participation in this program affected the ways in which these individuals conceived and enacted their role as workers. When we began data collection there were 19 participants at this site: Sixteen were Polaroid employees, and three were from a nearby company that paid for three employees to participate in the program. However, one employee from Polaroid and two employees from the nearby company dropped out of the CEI Adult Diploma Program at the beginning of their second trimester.

Not only did we believe that these programs would be ones from which we could deeply examine adults' learning experience in ABE/ESOL programs, but we also believed that they were programs from which other program designers and practitioners could gain new insights. Our study benefited from a longitudinal and process-oriented design through which we were able to follow closely individual learners throughout the duration of their programs, explore our research questions, and understand how, if at all, learners experienced transformational changes as they participated in these programs.

Research Questions

By looking at the developmental dimensions of transformational learning, we sought to examine, from the learners' perspective and from our developmental perspective, how the mix of supports and challenges provided by the three programs helped these adults in their learning. The following research questions guided our exploration:

1) How does developmental level (i.e., way of knowing) shape adults' experiences and definitions of the core roles they take on as learners, parents, and workers?

   What are the regularities in the ways in which adults at similar levels of development construct the role demands and supports in each of these domains?

2) How do adult learners' ways of knowing shape their experience and definition of programs dedicated to increasing their role competence?

   What are adult learners' motives for learning, definitions of success, conceptions of the learners' role, and understandings of their teachers' relationship to their learning?

3) What educational practices and processes contribute to changes in the learner's relationship to learning (vis-à-vis motive, efficacy, and meaning system) and specifically to any reconceptualizations of core roles?

4) To what extent does the level of a person's development/transformation predict success/competence?

   Are the similarities in experiences across roles related to developmental levels (i.e., ways of knowing)?

SECTION II: DATA COLLECTION METHODS

We employed a variety of data collection methods and tools, including qualitative interviews, structured exercises, classroom observations, focus groups, and quantitative survey type measures and Likert scales that we administered to each adult learner on at least three different occasions during the program (see Table 1 for data collection schedule).

Table 1: Schedule of Data Collection at Each Research Site

SITE	ROUND ONE OF DATA COLLECTION	ROUND TWO OF DATA COLLECTION	ROUND THREE OF DATA COLLECTION	ROUND FOUR OF DATA COLLECTION
BHCC, Community College Site	**October 1998** (for several hours on two separate days)	**December 1998** (for several hours on two separate days)	**May 1999** (for several hours on two separate days)	
Even Start, Family Literacy site	**November 1998** (for several hours on two separate days)	**March 1999** (for several hours on two separate days)	**July 1999** (for several hours on two separate days)	
Polaroid, Workplace site	**March/April 1998** (for several hours on two separate days)	**September 1998** (for several hours on two separate days)	**March 1999** (for several hours on two separate days)	**June 1999** (for several hours on two separate days)

As Table 1 indicates, the first wave of intensive data collection at BHCC occurred in early October 1998, the second in December 1998, and the final round in May 1999. Additionally, at this site, we conducted observations of classes during the academic year and teacher interviews at the start and toward the end of the academic year. At Even Start, the first wave of data collection took place in November 1998 and the second and third in March and July 1999. We also conducted periodic classroom observations. Additionally, teacher and program director interviews took place at the start and end of this program. At the Polaroid site, we engaged in four rounds of data collection (March/April 1998, September 1998, March 1999, and June 1999). We conducted periodic classroom observations throughout the duration of the CEI program. Similar to the other two sites, we conducted interviews with program teachers at the start and end of the program.

Although we considered interviewing each adult learner in his or her first language, because of the diversity of our sample across the three research sites and the expense associated with hiring interviewers who spoke each of the represented languages, this was not feasible. All interviews were administered individually and conducted in English. Talking individually with adult learners at different points during their programs helped us learn about their internal experiences of change. In this monograph we will discuss more fully what the processes of transformational learning looked like, how learners with different ways of knowing experienced such processes, and the practices and processes that learners named as supports to these changes.

Qualitative and Quantitative Measures: Rounds of Administration

Following is an overview of the qualitative interviews and survey-type measures we administered to the participants at all three sites. Before or near the start of each program, we administered the following protocols:

1) **Pre-Program Learner Focus Groups**. We facilitated focus groups in which adults were asked questions about their hopes and expectations for learning in their programs.

2) **Experiences of Learning Interview**. This qualitative interview was designed to help us better understand a learner's previous learning experiences and theories of teaching and learning processes. This interview was tailor-designed for each site, and through it we gathered information on learners' motives for participation, their learning goals, and their current understanding of the targeted role (i.e., student, parent, or worker). Additional topics included: educational history, conceptions of support for learning, and demographics.

3) **The Subject-Object Interview** (SOI, see Lahey et al., 1988). We administered the Subject-Object Interview to participants at all three of our sites during our first and final rounds of data collection. The Subject-Object interview is a semi-structured interview created to explore the ways an individual student, parent, or worker makes sense of his or her experience. The interview takes about one hour and is conversational in nature. Dr. Robert Kegan and his associates at the Harvard Graduate School of Education created the original SOI. The interview procedure is structured around a uniform set of probes, around which real-life situations of the interviewee are generated. The probes are constituted by a set of five cards. The interviewee writes a word or phrase on each card. The interviewer then explores the meaning that experience had for the interviewee and how meaning is organized. Through the SOI assessment procedure, we are able to distinguish five gradations between each way of knowing. Interrater reliability in studies using the original measure has ranged from .75 to .90. Several studies report expectedly high correlations with like measures (cognitive and social-cognitive measures). Our analysis of this measure included a developmental comparison of each participant's meaning making during our initial and final data collection. We were particularly interested in assessing changes in the ways in which participants made sense of their experiences from our first data collection period to our final one.

4) Loevinger's **Ego Development Sentence Completion Test**. We administered this measure to assess participant's developmental level.[1]

5) **Vignettes**. As will be discussed in Chapter 8, the vignette is a developmental measure we created for each of the sites (i.e., a hypothetical-problem solving measure used to assess an individual's way of knowing, and role competence in specific domains). The **Learner Vignette** is a developmental student-situated dilemma created to explore a student's decision-making, problem-solving skills, and sense of competency as related to their construction of authority. It presented a student/school dilemma and invited participants to respond to a set of questions designed to help us understand the reasoning underlying the decisions they would make. The **Parent Vignette** is a developmental role-situated dilemma created to explore a parent's decision-making, problem-solving skills and sense of competency as related to their construction of authority. It presented a parent dilemma and invited participants to respond to a set of questions designed to help us understand the reasoning underlying the decisions they would make. The **Worker Vignette** is a developmental work-situated dilemma created to explore a

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[1] After analyzing participants' initial responses to this measure, we decided not to administer it to participants during our final round of data collection. This and other survey type measures were the only protocols that we did not tape-record and transcribe.

worker's decision-making, problem-solving skills, and sense of competency as related to his or her construction of authority. It presented a workplace dilemma and invited participants to respond to a set of questions designed to help us understand the reasoning underlying the decisions they would make. We analyzed these vignettes qualitatively for role competency themes and also scored participants' responses in accordance with Kegan's constructive-developmental theory.

6) **Quantitative Survey Measures**. We administered several well-established and highly regarded quantitative measures to assess participants' levels of satisfaction, feelings of self-efficacy and success, and motivation.

    - Satisfaction with Life Scale: a five-statement questionnaire which ascertains a person's subjective judgment of his/her global life satisfaction.

    - Perceived Self-efficacy Scale: a 14-statement questionnaire which assess a person's perceived self-efficacy.

    - Locus of Control Scale: a seven-statement questionnaire which assesses a person's beliefs in her/his ability to control life circumstances, events, and problems.

7) **Self as Learner, Parent, or Worker Map**. We created and administered three tailor-designed mapping interviews to explore participants' perceptions of their roles as learners, parents, and workers. The mapping exercise provides a picture of the participant's current conceptions of the core elements of a particular role (i.e., learner, parent, or worker), his or her perceptions of the relationships among those elements, and their thinking processes. We used this as a tool for establishing and then tracking the participants' changing perceptions of themselves in their roles, the ways in which they value or devalue their role, their view of role relationships, the central emotions and beliefs they associate with a particular role, and the activities of their role. Each participant was invited to create a diagram of how they saw themselves in a particular role and to respond to our probes. This map helped us to explore each participant's role perception in his or her own words and through the lens of our theory.

Near the start of the program, we also administered a qualitative interview (i.e., the Teacher Experience Interview) to program teachers that focused on their goals for their students and their classes, their philosophy of teaching, and their methods for assessing learners' progress.

During each of the programs, we administered the following protocols to participants at each of the three sites:[2]

1) **Focus Groups**. We administered two different types of focus groups to program participants during the middle of the programs. One focus group invited participants to reflect on their learning experiences in their program classes, and the other invited them to discuss any changes they noticed in themselves as learners and as they enacted a particular role. In the second type of focus group, our intention was to better understand how learners felt their participation in a particular program was or was not affecting their performance in a particular role (i.e., worker, parent, or learner) at each site. We

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[2] As noted previously, at the Polaroid site we conducted two rounds of data collection during the middle months of the program.

developed this protocol to explore individuals' thinking perceptions of their roles and role-related responsibilities.

2) **During the Program—Experiences of Learning Interview**. This open-ended, semi-structured interview was designed to help us better understand participants' program learning experiences and how, if at all, they thought that their learning was making a difference to their thinking about and enactment of their role as worker, parent, or learner.

3) **Reflecting on Changes in Self as Learner, Parent, or Worker Map.** This interview was created and administered to continue exploring participants' perceptions of their role as workers, parents, or learners, in their own words and through the lens of our theory. It provided an opportunity for a participant to reflect on and add to the picture/map-diagram that he or she created when describing him or her self during the first round of data collection. Specifically, we asked learners to add to or change their prior map in any way that seemed appropriate based on changes that they saw in themselves and the ways in which their learning in the program was affecting their sense of themselves in a particular role. This protocol enabled us to trace learners' changing perceptions of themselves in a particular role, changes in the ways in which they valued or devalued their work, changes in their view of role relationships, changes in the central emotions and beliefs they associated with work, and changes in the way they conceptualized their role activities and responsibilities.

4) **Classroom Observations.** We conducted observations of learners in each of their program classes at least one time during each semester.

Near the end of or shortly after program completion, we administered the following protocols:

1) **The Subject-Object Interview** (SOI). Once again, we conducted a SOI with each participant in order to assess his or her developmental level (i.e., way of knowing). Scores and emergent themes from these interviews were compared to initial SOI scores and themes.

2) **Final Learning Experience Participant Interview**. We administered this open-ended, semistructured interview that we designed to better understand how participants at each of our three sites were thinking about their experiences in their program, the ways in which they felt they changed since the beginning of the program, and how each participant felt about himself or herself as a learner and in his or her social role at the end of the program. This protocol helped us to gain a deeper understanding of how the participants made sense of the changes they noticed in themselves and also to understand what participants experienced as sources of challenge and support in their role as a students and in their social roles (i.e., parent, worker, or learner). Additionally, we asked learners to reflect on their program experience overall, how their learning influenced their perceived role competencies, their learning goals, and their overall satisfaction with the program.

3) **Teacher Interview on the Changes They Noticed in Their Students.** This qualitative interview was administered to program teachers at or near the end of the program. It was designed to help us understand the changes these teachers noticed in each of their students during the course of the program. When administering this protocol to program

teachers at each site, we asked each teacher to talk with us about the changes he or she noticed in each of the learners in the program and to what or who he or she (the teacher) attributed the changes.

4) **Quantitative Survey Measures**. At program completion, we administered the same measures that we administered at the start of our research. Our goal was to assess participants' levels of satisfaction, feelings of self-efficacy and success, and motivation at program completion and to note any changes in these from the initial assessment we made before or near the start of the program.

5) **Vignettes**. At program completion, we administered the same vignette from our initial round of data collection to each learner at each site. Learner responses were analyzed qualitatively for role competency themes and also in accordance with Kegan's constructive-developmental theory.

6) **Reflecting on Changes Map.** We administered a final mapping interview (The Reflecting on Self as Student, Parent, or Worker Map). Separate mapping exercises/interviews were created for and administered to participants at each of the three sites. The protocols created an opportunity for our research team to talk with participants about the changes they noticed in their perceptions about themselves in a particular social role. We probed participants' current thinking about their perceptions of role competence and also attended to changes they discussed in their self-regard. This enabled us to continue exploring participants' perceptions of their role as workers, parents or learners, in their own words and through the lens of our theory. Since we had administered at least two prior mapping protocols to participants at each of our sites during our prior two rounds of data collection, this final mapping protocol gave participants a chance to discuss their current perceptions about their social role. Learners at each site were asked to review two past diagrams (i.e. maps) that they created and to add to or change the map in any way that seemed appropriate to them based on any changes that they noticed in themselves and the ways in which they saw their program learning as affecting their sense of themselves in a particular role. We documented learners' changing perceptions of themselves in a particular role, changes in the ways in which they valued or devalued their role, changes in the ways in which they viewed their role relationships, changes in the central emotions and beliefs they associated with a particular role, and changes in how they understood their role activities and responsibilities.

We also created a qualitative interview that we administered after the program had ended to several participants who did not complete their program. We refer to this as the **Non-Completer Interview**. Our goal was to gain a better understanding of how these participants were thinking about their experiences during the year, how and why they made the decision to leave the program, and their current conceptions of learning. Our aim was to learn more about what was *different* or *changed* for them since the beginning of the year. This interview was designed to help us learn more about the heart of the participant's experience—and the *differences* in how each learner thought or felt about himself or herself at the end of the year as compared to the beginning of the year. We probed participants' responses to better understand how they made sense of any changes they noticed in themselves and to learn about how they thought about the supports and challenges in their lives.

SECTION III: DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Our data analysis consisted of two distinct phases. We referred to these as the early and substantive phases. Research gains depth and focus when data collection and analyses are continuously integrated (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Our study benefited from this kind of purposeful integration.

The Early Phase of Data Analysis

Our early phase of data analysis focused on identifying consistencies and discrepancies within and across participants' data (Maxwell, 1996). We began this preliminary analysis by carefully examining data from the initial round of interviews at one site in order to develop and refine our analytic framework, which was later employed to analyze data from all sites. In this early phase we began by coding the learner interviews and the learner-generated maps to develop a coding schema. We then compiled a list of emerging themes derived from both theoretical codes (i.e., etic codes), and participant's own language (i.e., emic codes) (Geertz, 1974; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To facilitate coding, we initially utilized a qualitative data analysis software package entitled "NUD•IST;" however, we did not use this program in our later analysis because of unforeseen circumstances that arose in data formatting. As coding proceeded, we reorganized and reduced our code list to reflect key emerging concepts. This allowed us to better draw out distinctions among participants (e.g., participants' thinking about the learner/teacher relationship and how it changed over time, and the learners' experiences with fellow cohort members in their program and how their relationships changed over time).

To organize these analyses, we built matrices that enabled us to understand participants' responses to key interview questions across the sample site data. We also created "narrative summaries" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Maxwell & Miller, 1991) that extracted the critical themes and main points from the interview. In creating these summaries, we drew from interview data and our own interpretations of the data. Also, after each round of interviews at each of the sites research team members wrote analytic memos (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Maxwell, 1996), and as a full team we met to discuss our learnings. These memos and our tape-recorded conversations informed both the early and substantive phases of analysis.

To explore the influence of learners' ways of knowing on their experiences of change in the program, we examined the subject-object interviews and the vignettes. The subject-object interviews were scored using the principles and techniques which are described in the *Guide to Scoring the Subject-Object Interview* (Lahey et al., 1988). We initially scored one full set of SOI's and vignettes using multiple scorers to establish inter-rater reliability (we used the same method in our substantive analytic phase). We also coded these protocols using a subset of codes we developed earlier for the Learner Interviews.

The preliminary analyses, our individual analytic memos, and our full-team analytic conversations helped us organize important themes, highlight patterns across the data about how participants expressed their understanding of program learning, their relationships with their teachers, and their self-perceptions of their own skill development as learners and in a particular role over time. In combination, these matrices, summaries, and analytic conversations helped us identify patterns of transformation and develop the analytic framework that we employed in our substantive analytic phase.

The Substantive Phase of Data Analysis

Our substantive phase of data analysis was guided by the creation and refinement of our analytic framework, which we developed in light of learning from the early phase. During this second phase, our research team divided into analytic sub-teams (one sub-team analyzed data from each of the three sites). We focused on one participant per site per week and created thick narrative summaries in response to our overarching research questions. Since our analysis pivoted around our developmental perspective, we sequenced the exploration of our participants (in each sub-team) purposively. By this we mean that all individual analytic sub-teams first considered those participants with common initial (Time One) SOI scores. All sub-teams began with the participants who demonstrated an Instrumental way of knowing. Our analysis gradually built up a picture of the variety and commonality across that meaning-making world. After completing this part of the analysis, the sub-teams moved on to another common subject-object world to explore contrasts and commonalities across subject-object worlds.

In this exploration, we closely examined both social role-related analytic questions and learning and teaching related analytic questions. Additionally, we carefully explored how participants' conceptions of their roles changed over time. Our guiding questions for this analytic phase were as follows:

Role-Related Analytic Questions

1-A. How does the participant construct his or her role (parent, worker, or higher education student), and how does that construction change over time?

1-B. In the context of that role, how self-confident is the participant and how competent does he or she perceive himself or herself to be; and how does this change over time?

1-C. Is there any evidence of how competent the participant actually is in this specific role? Any evidence of how actual competence changes over time?

1-D. With respect to any changes noted in 1-A, 1-B, 1-C, what aspects of the participant's ABE program seem to contribute to the change? What outside the program seems to have contributed to the change?

Learning and Teaching-Related Analytic Questions

2-A. How does the participant construct the learning and teaching enterprise, and how does this construction change over time?

2-B. In the context of the role of a learner, how self-confident is the participant, and how competent does he or she perceive himself/herself to be; and how does this change over time?

2-C. Is there any evidence of how competent as a learner/student the participant actually is? Any evidence of how actual competence as a learner/student changes over time?

2-D. With respect to any changes noted in 2-A, 2-B, 2-C, what aspects of the participant's ABE program seem to contribute to the change? What outside the program seems to have contributed to the change?

To answer each of the four sub-questions, we created four-part analytic memos for each of the two role-related sets of questions and discussed these memos in site sub-team weekly meetings. In these meetings, we shared interpretations, entertained alternative plausible interpretations, and incorporated additional issues, discoveries, and ideas the sub-team noticed. These analytic role memos (which included data and interpretations) were then enhanced and elaborated on by integrating our sub-team conversations. During this intensive individual week-by-week participant analysis, our analytic sub-teams also met periodically as a full research team to discuss what we were learning from participants at each site and to identify key findings within and across sites (these conversations were tape-recorded).

To explore the influence of learners' ways of knowing on their experiences of change in the program, we examined the subject-object interviews and the vignettes. Also, the scoring of the formal measures of stress, life satisfaction, and ego development (collected as pre and post-assessments before and at the end of each program) were used to establish baselines as well as changes in these core constructs over time. The degree of change and the direction of change were captured in our quantitative analysis through descriptive statistics (please see Appendix A for a full description of our statistical analyses and their results). These assessments of variability were also correlated with changes in SOI score.

We used the developmental and qualitative data to dimensionalize (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) our definition of transformation and the holding environment, so that they corresponded to the data from the study itself. We looked for relationships between participants' experiences of changes as they related both to developmental level and to the timing of their occurrence in the trajectory of development from one stage to the next. We created matrices that linked patterns in ways of knowing across the groups to other aspects of participants' experiences, (e.g., other ongoing supportive contexts and their self-described motivation and goals). We traced patterns that emerged across the maps to track frequent and compelling descriptions of self and role in each context.

Having identified the learners whose experiences appeared transformational and those whose experiences changed in other ways, we analyzed the supports and challenges that coincided with both kinds of changes. Sub-teams then selected a set of participants whose stories served as case examples. These cases extended earlier narrative summaries in analytic memos of participants' experience, concentrating on key stories participants told about changes they experienced during the program. We integrated data from various sources and created a storyline for each case summarizing their experience in the program, their descriptions of their own skills, how they generalized to the concept of role competence, their reported changes during the program, and their recent experiences of real success.

SECTION IV: ANALYSIS AND WRITING—HOPES AND INTENTIONS IN EMPLOYING A DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

In our writing, our intention has been to illustrate key points in narratives as well as link them to salient themes across cases within and across all three sites. Our work illuminates how participants across a wide range of ways of knowing made sense of their program learning experience and how this learning influenced the ways in which they felt they were better able to enact their social roles. We see these cases as exemplars (Mishler, 1986) rather than as representative of a larger population. Each case example drew on all data sources to build a picture of the person's experiences as a learner and in a particular social role.

Throughout our analysis, we also looked for and examined discrepant data to test both the power and scope of our theory (Maxwell, 1996; Merriam, 1998). By attending to the data at the level of the individual narrative, group patterns, and case write-ups, we have built theory that accounts for the many levels of data and role specific perspectives on its interpretation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

It is our hope that this work illuminates how a developmental perspective can be a tool for better understanding how adults make sense of their program learning experiences and how this learning helps adults to grow to enact their roles as learners, parents, and workers differently. By better understanding learners' experiences teachers can better accompany them. Our intention is to broaden conceptions about how to support adult learners in their educational processes. More specifically, by bringing an explicitly meaning-making and adult developmental perspective to the world of ABE, we hope that this work will be useful to a wide range of professionals: concerned ABE learning-policy planners, program planners, ABE teachers, and professors of adult learning as well as their students. We hope to enable teachers and program planners to understand better how their students make sense of and enact the expectations placed on them in the classroom and in their lives beyond the classroom. We hope such understandings enable teachers and other practitioners to match educational practices and expectations more closely to the developing capacities and experience of their adult students. We offer our study's method as a resource for researchers and practitioners.

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CHAPTER THREE

Our Developmental Perspective On Adulthood

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CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND ON DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY: PIAGET AND THE NEO-PIAGETIANS

Throughout this monograph we use a developmental framework in our analysis of the participants' descriptions of their motivations for learning, their educational and personal goals, their academic expectations, and the cultural and learning challenges they face as students, workers, or parents in the U.S. Our particular developmental perspective, constructive-developmentalism, builds upon and is part of a 30 year old tradition of research and theoretical writing which derives from the work of Jean Piaget (1952, 1965), a Swiss psychologist who was fascinated by and dedicated to researching the cognitive development and later moral and social reasoning of children. Since Piagetian theory is foundational to the understanding of constructive-developmentalism, we first turn our attention to key concepts of Piaget's theory of cognitive development which are shared by our own developmental framework.

Piaget and his colleagues wished to better understand the nature and origins of knowledge. To this end, adapting a clinical method of study in which he presented various scientifically based problems for children of different ages to independently solve, Piaget (1952) devised a developmental conception of intelligence which describes how processes underlying children's reasoning and cognitive growth evolve and change over time. Specifically, from observations and interviews of children's problem solving approaches, Piaget and his colleagues discerned that children of different ages use distinctly different forms of reasoning to solve the presented problems. In other words, the reasoning that guides children's problem-solving approaches represents a continuum of increasingly complex and developmentally distinct ways of analyzing and interpreting a situation. In contrast to a more static view of knowledge and intelligence as fixed or as a process of accretion, Piaget conceived knowledge creation and expansion as a process of transformation of the very logics through which an individual interprets and analyzes incoming information. Cognitive development, then, is the result of the person's engagement with the environment in which the person actively organizes and interprets information according to a distinct and developmentally linked interpretive logic. Knowledge is continuously constructed and reconstructed and itself transforms as it is shaped and reshaped by the predictable and increasingly complex organized systems of thought as depicted by Piaget's developmental scheme.

A quick example may serve to illuminate this point.[1] If one asks a three year old which is larger, the earth or the sun, it is probable that she will reply the earth is larger because it is bigger. In this child's view the earth is bigger because visually the sun looks small in the sky. Here the child is orienting solely to her perceptions; her understanding of the relative size of the earth and sun are guided by the logic of what she directly observes. In this case, what is directly seen is equated with the actual size of the sun. In contrast, if one asks an eight year old the same question, which is larger the sun or the earth, she will predictably respond with a different answer—namely the sun. While it is true that this child may have learned that the sun is larger than the earth, an important transformation of the child's interpretive logic has taken place which allows her to offer such a response. If one probes beneath the response and asks for the reasoning underlying the eight year old's answer we would find that this child does not equate perceived size with actual size but uses the concept of perspective as a mediating idea to understand and distinguish actual and perceived size.

In Piaget's framework of cognitive reasoning, the difference in these two children's responses is not a difference in information or having been taught more. Piaget would maintain that even if one were to tell the young child that the sun is larger she would observe and understand the earth to be bigger. According to Piaget, the difference in the children's responses reflects their different developmental capacities to understand relations among and between things—in this case to use the logical principle of perspective. In Piaget's scheme, the eight year old has a qualitatively different way of understanding and interpreting and thus responding to the question asked.

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[1] This example is adapted from Reimer, Paolitto, and Hersh's (1979) descriptions of Piagetian logics.

Researchers and theorists of a "neo-Piagetian" persuasion have built upon the key concepts of Piaget's research extending the study of cognitive development beyond the development of Piaget's last stage of cognitive development, abstract thought (Basseches, 1984; Commons et al, 1990; King & Kitchener, 1994; Kohlberg, 1969, 1981; Perry, 1970). Other constructive-developmentalists have applied the key tenets of Piaget's framework to different domains of human development such as: adult learning and higher education (Belenky et al., 1986; Daloz, 1986; Macuika, 1990; Perry, 1970; Weathersby, 1976); moral and spiritual development (Kohlberg, 1969, 1981; Fowler, 1981; Parks, 1986); social and psychological development (Noam, 1990; Selman, 1980); skill development (Kitchener & Fischer, 1990); and self and identity development (Harter, 1999; Kegan, 1982, 1994). Constructive-developmental principles have also been used to research role capacity, particularly exploring the ways that increasing complexity in adult thought intersects with professional effectiveness and role leadership (Kegan and Lahey, 1983; Torbert, 1976, 1991); role efficacy and understanding as parents (Newberger, 1980; Roy, 1993; Sonnenschein, 1990); and spousal role communication and family patterns (Goodman, 1983; Jacobs, 1984).

While these research studies have contributed to a fuller understanding of the way development proceeds across the lifespan within many diverse domains, the samples of individuals researched have been, overall, quite distinct from the group of adult learners we have undertaken to interview in this particular study. Prior studies of adults which have used Kegan's theory of adult development and research methodology have generally been comprised of highly educated middle class English speaking adults. Thus, our research extends the use of this particular version of constructive-developmental theory to Adult Basic Education and English for speakers of other languages settings and applies a constructive-developmental perspective of adult learning to a sample of adults who are not middle class, not necessarily born in the United States (the majority of individuals in our sample are immigrants), and non-native English speakers. Our findings, therefore, are particularly exciting since, as we will describe in the following chapters, there are important resonances among these ABE/ESOL learners with both the prior literature and former research on adults, as well as some unique findings which we believe are specific to the ABE/ESOL adult learners we studied. In the truest sense then, we feel that this research on ABE/ESOL learners informs constructive-developmental theory generally, while a constructive-developmental model of adulthood informs our understanding of the learning goals, motives, and aspirations of these literacy learners.

KEGAN'S CONSTRUCTIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY OF ADULTHOOD

The research methodology and theoretical framework for this study of ABE/ESOL learners is largely premised on psychologist Robert Kegan's constructive-developmental theory of adult growth and change. In the tradition of neo-Piagetians, Kegan draws upon and extends notions of knowledge construction and cognitive development to the overall development of adults across the lifespan. According to Kegan (1982, p. 11), "There is no feeling, no experience, no thought, no perception independent of a meaning-making context." Thus, the unique contribution of Kegan's theory in addition to its explicit depiction of a developmental trajectory of adult growth is his assertion that the very process of constructing reality—or making and interpreting meaning—is the master motion of personality, the fundamental activity of a human being. We humans are builders of meaning, and as any parent of a young child knows, we start with the very basics of naming, of seeing similarities, regularities, and patterns. We are organizers of those regularities and patterns, constructing ever more complex systems of meaning-making—or ways of knowing and interpreting—in an attempt to bring coherence to them and to our world. Our framework of adult development, then, may be conceived as a theory of consciousness development or of "cultures of mind" in which a person's development is twinned to the process of making increasingly complex meaning of an increasingly complex world. Again, Kegan's theory takes as its focus the gradual, transitional nature of the evolution of the meaning-making process over the life course.

We next introduce and elaborate on several key principles which underlie our developmental framework of adult growth and consciousness evolution.[2]

- Development is a lifelong process.
- The developmental process is distinct from notions of life tasks or life phases.
- Development is more than the accumulation of new information and represents qualitative changes in the very ways we know.
- Societal role and task demands on adults frequently outpace their current developmental capacities.
- Development transpires through ongoing interaction between the person and the environment.

The key processes of developmental movement link to the stability and change of the meaning frameworks through which we interpret experience. These are assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration.

Development is a lifelong process.

As we have already noted, a constructive-developmental view of adult growth presumes that the same processes that underlie children's development continue throughout the life course. Unlike some theories of adulthood, a constructive-developmental approach to consciousness development maintains that adults' minds continue to grow and become more complex. We understand development as a gradual process which varies within and across individuals. While this gradualness and variability is perhaps most obvious in infancy and childhood, developmental growth and transformations commonly take years to occur and every person moves at her own unique and distinct pace. Although the pace of a person's development is unique and variable there is some evidence to suggest that one's environment may support or constrain the motion of development.

The developmental process is distinct from notions of life tasks or life phases.

Some life cycle and adult developmental theorists (Levinson, 1978, 1996; Erikson, 1968; Scarf, 1980) equate the motion of development with passage through distinct life phases, e.g., infancy, latency age, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, late adulthood. In these conceptions development is frequently conceived as the negotiation of particular tasks associated with a specific phase in a person's life. For example, Erikson's life cycle theory (1968) describes a development as a loosely age-linked sequence of psychosocial crises (such as the adolescent crises of identity formation) which need to be navigated and resolved in ways yielding either ego strengths or ego vulnerabilities. In contrast, our constructive-developmental theory of adult growth depicts the processes underlying meaning-making, the engine of development, as generally independent from a particular age or phase of life. Individuals who are the same age may be making sense in qualitatively distinct ways. Moreover, in a way that is substantially different from life task theorists, our theoretical model of development suggests that a particular task may be differently understood, interpreted, and responded to depending on the individual's given way of knowing at the time of the task negotiation. In other words, it is a person's way of knowing rather than his age or life phase which is determinative of task resolution.

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[2] The following principles are adapted from Popp & Portnow, 1998.

Development is more than the accumulation of new information and represents qualitative changes in the very ways we know.

We make the distinction between informational learning and transformational learning. Informational learning we see as "learning that primarily focuses on the acquisition of more skills and an increased fund of knowledge [while] we define transformational learning as learning which not only increases knowledge but, more importantly, leads to deep and pervasive shifts in a [person's] perspective and understanding" (Portnow, Popp, Broderick, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 1998; p. 22). Once again, we see these deep shifts in a person's perspective and understanding as reflective of the qualitative changes in a person's organizing interpretive logic or meaning system. Thus, development is about the qualitative changes in the very way we know.

In our framework, these organizing logics represent the *structure* of our thinking, which we distinguish from the *content* of our thinking. In other words, the *structure* of our way of knowing is the underlying form of reasoning we use which comprises and bounds any given logic or way of knowing. In turn, these logics form the interpretive lens through which we make sense of the *content of our lives*. *Content*, then, is the "stuff" of our lives, the actual things that happen to us, the storyline. The *structure* and *content* of a person's meaning making are both critically important and mutually influencing factors in a person's development.

In our earlier example in which we delineated some key Piagetian principles, we described the different ways that two children, one three years and one eight, would answer the question, which is larger, the sun or the earth? This same question (or content) was understood differently (structured through different logics) by the two children whose thinking was governed by two different meaning systems, one bound by her immediate perceptions and one who was developmentally able to differentiate, through the logical principle of perspective, the perceived size from the actual size. These logics (or structures of thought) which undergird our meaning making comprise a sequence and are qualitatively distinct from each other. Each logic builds upon, integrates, and transforms the reasoning capacities of the previous one.

We believe that a logic or given way of knowing shapes and influences *multiple aspects* of a person's life, e.g., a person's self-understanding, her interactions and relations with others, and her interpretations of events and ideas. Here the implications for practitioners are great. For example, since people move at their own distinct pace and since a way of knowing affects one's sense-making across multiple realms, this model of development implies that within a classroom of adult students, individuals may be interpreting their educational experiences through different logics. For instance, their views of learning, their definitions of educational success or expectations for their instructors, etc. will be differently conceived based on the way of knowing from which they are operating.

Societal role and task demands on adults frequently outpace their current developmental capacities.

As a culture we tend to have certain expectations for how adults should behave, respond, and think. We see these expectations as having within them implicit demands for adults to be operating from a particular logic or way of knowing. Since development is variable and gradual, those expectations often exceed the actual capacities of adults. For example, we expect that parents will and can understand their children's perspective. We commonly assume that parents will be able to put themselves in their children's shoes and thus set limits on their children's behavior which both adheres to parental values and incorporates an understanding of how their children will feel about and react to what they, the parents, say and require. In another example, we frequently expect and reward workers for taking initiative, for being able to set their own work agenda without a supervisor's consistent direction or feedback. In the realm of adult learning, it is not uncommon for college curricula or particular undergraduate and graduate courses to require students to develop or apply critical thinking to the course material. Using our developmental perspective on adult reasoning and growth, we see these various expectations as not merely requirements for particular behaviors but actually as implicit and yet unacknowledged requirements that adults be making sense in a particular way of knowing. Since, as we noted, a great number of adults may not yet be operating from the required way of knowing, we believe there is potential for considerable mismatch between the adult's developmental capacities and the role or task demand expectations. Understanding both the developmental continuum in general and a person's own developmental capacities is important to create the appropriate and necessary kinds of supports and learning challenges to help adults successfully meet the expectations and demands of their lives in this culture.

Development transpires through ongoing interaction between the person and the environment.

A very important principle in the constructive-developmental framework is the notion that development does not happen in a vacuum. Development happens in the context of the ongoing interaction between the person and his or her environment. We construct meaning from our experience within the context of and in relation to our social-cultural, physical, and psychological environments. In the words of the social psychologist, George Herbert Mead, "[The individual] constitutes society as genuinely as the society constitutes the individual" (1962, p. xxv). In this interchange between our environments and our minds and the evolution of each, the issue of which comes first fades in the light of a more absorbing question: how each inspires the growth in the other. In the particular context of our study, talking with adult students, primarily non-native English speakers from other cultures, about their experiences learning in American ABE/ESOL programs, this question takes on an even more complex set of issues—issues of learning a new language and issues of acculturation.

> Whether fresh insight comes first or fresh words I don't know. To this day, I am as bemused by the hen and egg dilemma as I was at six years old. But I know this: When we begin to get new insight we tend to find new words, for only by using the new can we, in turn, communicate the new insight to others or even to ourselves. Surely there is a simultaneity about this matter of fresh ideas gushing in to our minds. A new gestalt is formed, a new coming-together of multiple forces [internal and external] takes place and this gestalt transforms us and the situation in which we exist. (Lillian Smith quoted in Stein, 2000)

In our framework we characterize this "situation in which we exist," the social, physical, psychological context(s) in which and through which an individual develops and comes to know and define his very self as the "holding environment." As we noted in the introduction to our monograph, the term "holding environment" builds on a psychological concept created by British psychiatrist, D. W. Winnicott (1965). The concept, which itself ignites a vivid mental image of a person being held, purports that the very way our psychosocial context regards and supports us deeply affects our sense of well-being and the trajectory of our development. Kegan's theory (1982) of adult development draws upon and further elaborates this psychological idea, relating it to the process of development throughout the life course. He writes,

> There is never 'just an individual;' the very word refers only to that side of the person that is individuated, the side of differentiation. There is always, as well, the side that is embedded; the person is more than an individual . . . the self [is] embedded in the life-surround . . . There is never just a you; and at this very moment your own buoyancy or lack of it, your own sense of wholeness or lack of it, is in large part a function of how your own current embeddedness culture [your holding environment] is holding you. (p. 116)

The holding environment as we define it has three primary functions (Kegan, 1982): *1. holding on, 2. letting go, and 3. remaining in place.* In the first function the holding environment *holds on* to or supports and recognizes the individual by acknowledging how he thinks and feels *and* by joining *the very way he understands and interprets* the world. Performing the second function, the holding environment, *lets go* of the individual by gently challenging the way a person makes sense, raising questions of how a person thinks and feels with the hope of pushing on the limits of one's current way of knowing and construction of self. In other words, the process of letting go entails providing experiences and ideas that the current meaning system cannot adequately address and make sense of so as to promote the creation of a new way of understanding which the theory depicts as the motion of development. In the final function, the holding environment *remains in place* by maintaining as a consistent sounding board or context of confirmation so as to enable the coherent integration of new situations, ideas, feelings, and interactions, thus scaffolding the construction of a new meaning system or way of knowing.

Although the concept of the holding environment may appear to the reader as an abstract construct, it actually has direct bearing on the way we meet our adult roles and has important applications for practitioners across various fields. This is because we are simultaneously the creators of holding environments for others as well as the receivers of the holding contexts others create for us. This idea implies that we are intimately engaged and participants in multiple holding environments at any one given point in our life trajectory. For example, parents commonly create and provide a holding environment for their children. Friends provide a context of support, a holding environment, for each other, as do intimate partners. The workplace sets another sort of psychosocial context of growth and development while teachers of children and/or adults necessarily establish intentional or unintentional classroom climates that are themselves holding environments.

The key processes of developmental movement and change: Assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration.

It merits repeating that constructivist theories of developmental change cast the individual as an active agent in his own growth. These theoretical models share the conviction that individuals are consistently engaged in constructing knowledge, imposing meaning, organization, and structure upon experience. It is this process that brings coherence and ballast to our lives. As developmental psychologist Michael Basseches (1984, p. 34) writes,

> A world of 'pure experience' unstructured by acts of human cognitive categorization would be nothing more than James' 'blooming, buzzing confusion' (1890, p. 488). What human cognition does is to impose various kinds of order, or stability , on that confusion. We need something to remain the same, or a least recognizable (i.e., cognizable as the same), amidst the continual changes that occur in our experiential field.

Human beings naturally strive for *both* order or organization and stability or a sense of balance and equilibrium—a kind of constancy in the context of processes of change and growth. Yet, these forms of organization and order which humans employ are not random according to constructive-developmentalists and, as we have described, represent a predictable sequence of increasingly complex interpretive logics which guide and filter our analyses and understandings of events, interactions, and knowledge. It is important to note that a particular logic or way of knowing represents *both* the "organized cognitive *possibilities* and *limits* that characterize [a person's] thinking and feeling processes at given point in [his] development (Reimer, Paolitto, & Hersh, 1979 p. 25). Thus, faced with novel information or new experience, the individual first attempts to interpret the situation through her existing way of knowing. This process of filtering and analyzing experience through the current way of organizing information (the current way of knowing) is what Piaget named the process of *assimilation*. Assimilation then, is the way a person deals with environmental information in an attempt to make the unknown recognizable and to maintain a sense of equilibrium or order. A person may assimilate new information into her existing way of knowing when the new information approximates her current interpretive framework. However, when information is not readily incorporated into a given current way of understanding, the way of understanding itself must change or become substantially modified in order to be able to coherently organize the new information. This process in which an existing interpretive framework, or way of knowing or logic is changed is known as *accommodation*.

In Piaget's model of cognitive development, (and in subsequent applications of his theory to multiple domains of development) substantial growth and change of these interpretive logics proceeds when there is a moderate challenge to the individuals' current way of knowing that requires the creation of a wholly new interpretive logic. This moderate challenge has been previously described by researchers, educators, and classroom practitioners as cognitive conflict or cognitive dissonance. However, it is important to note, that in an effort to retain equilibration individuals attempt to assimilate information. It is out of necessity that individuals' interpretive lenses radically and qualitatively change, or are accommodated. In other words, we assimilate if we can and accommodate if we must. As we have intimated above, one's environmental context has great influence on the ways these developmental processes of assimilation and accommodation play out.

Recently, neo-Piagetian researchers (Fischer & Pipp 1984; Kitchener & Fischer, 1990) have focused their attention on additional forms of growth, the incremental changes that may occur within a person's overall current way of organizing information. These changes represent what we term as the subphases or developmental steps of growth that lead to an eventual overhaul of a person's way of knowing into a more complex logic. These steps comprise a consolidation and elaboration of emergent ways of knowing or organizing experience and understanding that allow for increased coordination, and interrelation and extension of skill and capacity within a knowledge domain (and sometimes across knowledge domains) within a given meaning system or way of knowing. Moreover, this view of consolidation and elaboration that transpires within a given meaning frame helps us to appreciate and understand both the large qualitative changes of a given way of knowing as well as the slow, continuous, and incremental developmental strengthening that may occur within a meaning framework.

In a way that is similar, but subtly extends Piaget's theory, these neo-Pingetian researchers believe that when a new meaning system or way of knowing first emerges, a person's "best performance in a familiar domain improves sharply . . . [and] is followed by a period of several years during which . . . [there is] a growth plateau. These plateaus do not indicate developmental stasis but instead mark a time of extension and elaboration of skill" (Kitchener & Fischer, 1990). Thus, in our definition, consolidation and elaboration may be an integral part of the process of subphase movement. Consolidation and elaboration may also take place within a particular subphase of a logic thereby creating a kind of "developmental virtuosity" within a subphase, thus involving no actual movement toward the next subphase. On the other hand, consolidation and elaboration of a capacity or skill may come at a moment of developmental ripeness such that it promotes subphase movement. Such an understanding has implications for practice in that it suggests that an individual's developmental movement and skill enhancement benefit from optimal support for the emergence, extension, and elaboration of a way of knowing and the skills that subtend to it (Daloz, 1986; Fischer & Pipp 1984; Kegan, 1982, 1994).

WAYS OF KNOWING IN ADULTHOOD[3]

With these principles in mind, we will now look at the particular ways of knowing or meaning systems that are most common in adulthood. (We identify six meaning systems that span the life cycle from birth through adulthood, but only three of these occur with any regularity in adulthood. For an in-depth discussion of the entire spectrum, we refer the reader to Kegan, 1982.) These meaning systems are qualitatively different from each other, and each has its own distinct logic. We refer to these systems as the Instrumental way of knowing (meaning system 2); the Socializing way of knowing (meaning system 3); and the Self-Authoring way of knowing (meaning system 4). Since development is a gradual process and the evolution from one way of knowing or meaning system to another has been documented to take years (Kegan 1994), we also identify transitional subphase "markers" between each system. These markers identify the gradual emergence of and transformation to a new system of meaning. We will first describe the levels and then describe the transitional subphases between them.[4]

To embody these meaning system descriptions we have included quotes from the learners in our study after defining the salient and distinguishing features of the particular logic. We offer these quotes as both examples of how these meaning systems sound and as a way of tuning the reader's ear to the important distinctions among the meaning systems. We also hope that by including these quotes we move from what seem like rather static and categorizing definitions of a person's meaning system to a richer appreciation of how these systems apply to and texture an individual's thoughts and feelings as she engages with the world.

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[3] Throughout this monograph, we will use the terms "ways of knowing," "meaning systems," "ways of understanding," "level of development" interchangeably. They all refer to the same notion.

[4] The descriptions of the three common adult meaning systems are drawn from Popp and Portnow, 1998.

Three Common Adult Meaning Systems or Ways of Knowing

Instrumental Way of Knowing (Meaning System 2)

The Instrumental meaning system is characterized primarily by its concrete, external, and transactive orientation to the world. With this way of knowing, one's experience of the world, of others, and of oneself is understood and organized by concrete attributes, events, sequences; by observable actions and behaviors; by one's own vantage point, interests, and preferences. Rules, sets of directions and a dualistic sense of right and wrong guide one's daily life, providing the trajectory for the right way to do what one needs to do, whether helping kids with homework or doing one's job. Interactions with others are based on a kind of tit-for-tat mentality.

- One's understanding and meaning-making is characterized by a very concrete orientation to the world. The self is identified with and defined through one's self-interests; by concrete needs, purposes, plans, wants. One tends to describe herself in concrete, external, or behavioral terms such as one's physical characteristics, one's concrete likes and dislikes, the kind of job one has, the kind of car one drives.
- Characterized by dualistic thinking such as right vs. wrong, and arbitrary either/or distinctions.
- Concerned with concrete consequences such as: "I want to get my GED so I can get a better job/make more money." "If I do/don't do this, will I get fired?" "Will I get caught or punished?"
- Others are seen as either pathways or obstacles to getting one's concrete needs met. For example, "If you like me, there's a better chance that you'll help me get/do what I want. If you don't like me, you won't help me get what I want." Interactions with others are understood in terms of their concrete elements (the facts of what transpired), the concrete give-and-take (what I help you with, what you help me with), and concrete outcomes (I get a better grade).
- Strong reliance on rules to know how to accomplish something and to do it the right way.
- Thinks through categories. Not capable of abstract thinking or making generalizations.
- Understanding of the Golden Rule[5] has a tit-for-tat mentality: "I'll do to you what you do to me."

Here is how one of the participants in our study with this particular meaning system responded when asked to talk about the ways that other people are different from her and what that means to her. Statements in bold type highlight the essence of the way of knowing.

> You have an idea but another person has an idea and can help you. Is a good idea, it can help you change. . . . Sometimes I have discussion with other students. **You give your opinion. I give my opinion, they give their opinions.** Sometimes I discuss . . . **If you like that you can take something, something good you take it.** If it's something they know . . . you see it that way, you can do this. . . . You know some cultures have the custom but my culture no. You know some culture like

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[5] The Golden Rule as commonly stated is "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." from the Gospel of Matthew 7:12, and Luke 6:31. It is a common ethic of reciprocity in many of the world's religions.

> another people have costume, for it to show your culture, but my culture you can wear anything, is special dress for wedding . . . different costumes for the culture . . . **I think it's a good idea to learn something you don't know** . . . it's important, you didn't go to all the culture, but you need to know if . . . you have idea to visit, you will know how they work.

The orientation in the Instrumental meaning system is toward the concrete, transactive elements of the interaction: what you have that can help me, what I have that can help you. An individual with this meaning system tends to have a clear, concrete goal, driven by his or her own self-interests, i.e., "what will help me do things right/get what I want/need?" The descriptions of this way of knowing can sound somewhat mercenary, depicting someone very self-centered and manipulative. While it is possible for someone with this meaning system to be just that, it is also possible for someone to be very generous and kind-hearted, even if in a very concrete way. As the quote demonstrates, the student here very much enjoys this kind of give-and-take interaction and enjoys getting and giving this kind of information that is clearly and specifically useful: "If you like that you can take something, something good you take it" and "You need to know if . . . you have idea to visit, you will know how they work." The orientation is to the concrete, factual information that will help the person know the right thing to do.

Socializing Way of Knowing (Meaning System 3)

The Socializing meaning system is characterized primarily by its orientation to the world of the interior, internalizable, and interactive. Others are oriented to not only as a completion of the self but as sources of orientation and authority. "Other" can be relational—important people in one's life, whether friends, colleagues, teachers, supervisors, anyone in a position of authority. Or "other" can be ideational—religious, political, philosophical. Whatever the nature of the other, a person with a Socializing way of knowing gets from it a sense of self, a sense of identity, belonging, validation, acceptance; a sense of sameness, of commonality, of shared experience with others.

- Self is defined by an abstract sense of identity: "I am a sensitive person." "I am shy." "I feel confused a lot." Sense of self is defined by opinions and expectations of others: "If she gets mad at me I feel like I am a really bad person and that she doesn't like me anymore."
- Feels empathy; feels responsible for other's feelings; experiences others as responsible for own feelings. "I made him feel terrible; it's my fault he feels bad." "She made me feel good about myself."
- Concerned with abstract psychological consequences: "Am I still a good person?" "Am I meeting your expectations of me?" "Do you still like/love/value me?" "Do I still belong?"
- Intolerant of ambiguity. Needs a clear sense of what others expect and want from him or herself and feels a strong obligation and duty to meet those expectations.
- Others are experienced as co-constructors of the self: "What you think about me tells me who I am and what kind of person I am."
- Reliance on external authority and important others for standards, values, acceptance, belonging, and sense of identity.
- Capable of abstract thinking, thinking about thinking.
- Criticism is experienced as destructive to the self: "If you don't like what I did/said/am, I am not a good person."

- Understanding of the Golden Rule deals with issues of mutuality and loyalty and obligation: "I should do for you what I hope and need and expect you should do for me."

When asked to talk about issues of diversity and the ways that others are different from himself and what that means to him, this student with a Socializing way of knowing responded this way:

> Well, American students are different than international students. The international students came from different cultures and **understood each other**. The American culture is different. **So we share the same thinking** about American culture, that it's different than we came from. So **that makes us to connect and to relate to each others. We have the same feelings.** So when you go to other classes, we don't have that. You feel like you are there the minority, and here is you are now a majority, **all of us internationals who don't speak the same language, but we connect.** When you go there, you feel like minority, and something doesn't connect there. I guess we feel strange in this country.

The orientation in the Socializing meaning system is toward a sense of belonging, of connecting around similarities with each other and feeling a common sense of identity and purpose. An individual with this meaning system is driven by, among other things, the need to be understood by, connected to, and identified with a person, group, philosophical, or religious stance. As we will see in the upcoming chapters, feeling this sense of belonging and identity with the cohort can be an especially powerful experience for an adult learner who currently has a Socializing way of knowing.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing (Meaning System 4)

The Self-Authoring meaning system is characterized by its capacity to take responsibility for and ownership of its own internal authority; its capacity to internally hold, manage, and prioritize the internal and external demands, contradictions, conflicts, and expectations of oneself and one's life.

- Self is defined by its own internal authority, and by the capacity to differentiate between parts of itself and parts of others.
- Can hold contradictory feelings simultaneously. Self can disagree with itself, feel two or more contradictory or conflicting things at the same time.
- Concerned with consequences for personal integrity and meeting one's own standards: "Am I competent?" "Am I living/working/loving up to my full potential?" "Am I upholding my own values and standards?" The self is the evaluator of its own performance and the holder of its own standards and values. "I evaluate myself according to what I have decided is important."
- Integrates others' perspectives, including criticism, as one perspective among many. Evaluates and uses criticism and other perspectives according to own internally generated standards and values.
- Others are experienced as autonomous entities with their own psychological agendas and standards. Differences with others are experienced as a given, are appreciated as such and are taken as opportunities for growth and creativity.
- Reliance on own authority. "I am my own authority on my values and standards and goals, and especially on what I know, what I need to know, and what I don't know, and can choose to consult with others to enhance my own authority."

- Understanding of the Golden Rule deals with the recognition, acknowledgment, and respect of different values and standards: "Doing for each other supports each of us in meeting our own self-defined values, ideals, and goals, and helps preserve the social order."

Here one of the participants in our study with this meaning system responded when asked the same question about the impact and experience of the diversity of the cohort.

> I leave [Even Start] last year . . . I transfer to the other program . . . but I don't like what they teaching, no . . . because I saw [it was] back too down. [It was too simple?] Yes . . . and **when I went there . . . this is what it looked to me like wasting time and I left** . . . [I was learning more at Even Start] . . . yes, we studied social studies, science, history . . . [You wanted more information about subjects, than just about reading and writing?] Yes, exactly, that's it . . . [At Even Start] we **have different nationalities there, you know, from Africa, from the Caribbean, from Europe, even from United States . . . So we look like United Nations there. That was wonderful . . . studying different cultures, different history, what it is exactly the people, how they live in different areas . . .** Yes, we all of the time talk about culture, especially what is the government of the country, how they are run, what they do.

A person with the Self-Authoring meaning system orients to his or her own internal authority and then sets that in relation to the context(s) in which he or she resides or wants to reside, as this student did in choosing a learning environment better suited to his own goals for his learning. The goals set by someone with this way of knowing reflect his or her own values, standards, agenda, and are conceived out of an understanding and experience of him or herself in relation to the social and political and environmental worlds he or she moves among. The wonderful thing for this student in the diversity of the class he chose was the wealth of information available in the wide range of experiences and origins of the other students. He sought out and appreciated the differences between and among the other students and himself and their cultures rather than needing to find the similarities.

The Transitional Sub-Phases of Development

These brief quotes illustrating the foundations of the three different meaning systems found in adulthood give us a sense of the increasing complexity and the ongoingness of the development of the adult mind. As we noted earlier, development is a gradual process, its movement as varied as each individual. No one person's development is predictable as to its pace. However, while the pace of development is varied and individual, the progression is predictable. Between each of the systems identified above, there are four observable phases in between, marking the gradual evolution of a new meaning system out of the old one. Each phase is more complex than the last, always incorporating the previous phase into the new one.

We have a shorthand for understanding these transitional phases which giv[illegible] visual sense of the evolution (Lahey, et al., 1988). If X is the current meaning system, and Y is the evolving meaning system, a trajectory of the evolution from X to Y is symbolized like this: X—>X(Y)—>X/Y—>Y/X—>Y(X)—>Y. In position X(Y), the meaning system X is working just fine, but the person begins to bump up against a growing sense of its limitations and has a kind of uneasy sense that there is something else to think about or some other way to "be" but doesn't quite know what it is or how to articulate it. In the X/Y position both structures are fully operative, each on behalf of the other. The X structure works to bolster the emerging Y and the Y works to both defend and transform the X. The same is true for the Y/X position, but with the Y structure being dominant. In the Y(X) position, the Y structure is fully dominant, and the (X) is the remnant of the previous structure, acting as a kind of nagging, if you will, at the new structure. The new Y structure works hard to keep that remnant of the former meaning system at bay, to shore up it's own new meaning and balance.

Calling upon our earlier stated principle as to the gradualness of the evolution from one meaning system to the next, it is important to note that in all of the longitudinal data we have reviewed (Kegan, 1994), the evolution from one subphase to the next has not taken place in less than one year. So, while this evolution is indeed variable among individuals, it seems that there is a certain minimal amount of time required to integrate a new meaning system and replace the old one. Conversely, there is no maximum limit on the length of time the transformation may take.

To illustrate these rather abstract pictures of the subphases of development, we use the voices from the learners in our study to show how someone with each of these progressive meaning systems might respond to the question of how the diversity in the classroom has impacted his or her life and learning. Here is a learner from the Polaroid site in the beginning transitional phase between the Instrumental and the Socializing meaning systems, the 2(3) position:

> When they (the other cohort members who were from other countries) read their life stories, it was kind of, you could see the struggle some of them had how they came here and met their husbands and met their wives . . . I never thought about people (like that) before? I never thought about foreigners. To me, stop the flow at the border, you know, but what would have happened if a hundred years ago, they stopped my family from coming in, stuff like that.
>
> I just know I see them in a different light, people from other countries, than I did before. To me, they were just invaders. Not invaders, I shouldn't have said that. You know, I don't know what I mean. Just to see them and . . . actually talk to them and hear their life stories, and most of them struggling coming up. . . . I'm just trying, I ain't got the right words . . . I have a better appreciation for people who come from poor countries and third world countries.

The beginnings of the emergence of the Socializing meaning system here adds a beginning awareness of a way to think and feel beyond how one has always thought and felt—a beginning awareness of the relationship between people as an entity in itself—and a new kind of concern about the struggles, feelings, and experiences of the other; beginning to see the other(s) in the context of their lives and struggles. And a beginning awareness of a different way to think, that there is something of value in knowing another besides the concrete help, facts and information that has always been the cornerstone of one's knowledge and understanding.

In the next phase, 2/3, as the Socializing way of knowing evolves to a fuller presence, that concern for feeling comfortable with others, feeling a sense of belonging, and the beginning sense of identification with others becomes more important, even while being constructed in the context of the more concrete issues of helping each other with the assignments:

> It's the people. They are very friendly here because they have been in the same situation, like they want to learn because they are new here, and they are very friendly . . . The program, the class I am in, they are not stuck up [like the Americans in my other class]. In the beginning they don't talk to you because you are new, because that is the first day. So later on you get used to each other, and we talk to each other . . . It's fun because you feel comfortable. You feel comfortable working with them, and we can help each other with the stuff that we don't understand. . . . My friend, his name is Tak-Jang, like when I have problems, I ask him for help, and I feel comfortable with him because I am always with him, and he can help me on to write an essay, and explain to me the questions. It's just that you feel comfortable around them . . . Surprising to me is that the people that I have class with, they are very friendly, and I actually study.

The experience of feeling comfortable with someone or with a group speaks to the evolution of a sense of self that is increasingly constructed in relation to others. The context of the concrete elements of the interaction and relationship still provide the foundation for this new sense of self in relation to others and provide the validation for it, since the relationship still satisfies the concrete needs and goals.

In the next phase, 3/2, when the Socializing way of knowing is becoming more dominant, the concern for others begins to dominate other concerns, the sense of similarity with others begins to create a bond that is more about the relationships themselves than the usefulness of them. The concrete context still remains as the way to ground the connection with others—relating to the concrete give-and-take of sharing information with each other:

> We work together with our friend . . . we talk together and everybody is friends . . . we share food from different culture, we sit together . . . make little party . . . when some friend not come and not at school we ask our teacher, what happened to her if she not come? But the first times nobody know everybody, but after we was together we share some things . . . other people, surprise when they say something, you say, "oh." But some people have something is same [in] my country . . . But if you not share something, you don't know . . . if you have some idea you can share, you can share something good they can take . . . we discuss . . . because everybody has children too.

In the final phase of the transition, 3(2), as the Instrumental meaning system is almost completely transformed, the concerns are much more about the shared realities and the ways they learn from each other. The (2) manifests itself in a fading context of concrete information and learning:

> we come from different country that have different culture . . . Everything different. We discuss and we learn something from, maybe other country is good, maybe other parents they teach something is different. I will try that, and everybody is different . . . Well because we talking about, we learn many things, we come from many countries and we can learn or we are talking about their country and also we learn many countries' culture and many, many things . . . Yes, other people come from other countries. They have different culture, different opinion, everything is

> different. And we know. . . . We enjoy it. We learn, too. We enjoy it with other students, they come from other country. We don't know their culture, their customs and when they are talking about their culture and their country, we know it and we learn . . . They want to know how in my country and so like I can tell them. They learn too, my country's culture.

The primary orientation here is the sharing of so many differences, the acknowledgment that everybody has a different opinion and that the differences are valued within the context of teaching each other, sharing with each other, enjoying the interest of the others in one's own culture.

The transition from the Instrumental way of knowing to the Socializing way of knowing can be roughly characterized as the evolution of thinking from concrete to abstract, and as the evolution of the regard for relationships with others as evolving from a means-to-an-end to an end in and of themselves. The mind, in it's journey through this evolution, becomes increasingly malleable, able to think about its own thinking, able to generalize, take on other's feelings—empathize, hold two different feelings at the same time. The transition from the Socializing meaning system to the Self-Authoring meaning system is another evolution to yet another radically different capacity of mind. We will now turn to that transition, illustrating it in the same manner, taking off from the earlier quoted voice of the student at BHCC, demonstrating the Socializing meaning system, repeating it here for clarity and continuity:

> Well, American students are different than international students. The international students came from different cultures and understood each other. The American culture is different. So we share the same thinking about American culture, that it's different than we came from. So that makes us to connect and to relate to each others. We have the same feelings. So when you go to other classes, we don't have that. You feel like you are there the minority, and here is you are now a majority, all of us internationals who don't speak the same language, but we connect. When you go there, you feel like minority, and something doesn't connect there. I guess we feel strange in this country.

The important issue, again, for this student is the sense of sameness he feels with the other students—the "same thinking about American culture," the "same feelings," and how that "makes us to connect." This sense of sameness, the sense of belonging and support is essential for an experience of well-being for someone with the Socializing way of knowing.

We will now hear from a student who is in the beginning of the transition to the Self-Authoring meaning system, beginning with the first transitional phase 3(4):

> We all was [in the same boat], all foreigners. [At least two] of them wasn't [foreigners]. They were [really] American. We're all foreigners. We are all here for the same goal [to] learn English better because so many of them really struggle at their work place. They can not explain themselves and if you have—[if] there is a promotion, promotion around [at work], they can't do it just by not having high school diploma. . . . [W]e all got our strengths. We all have our weaknesses. Maybe what I, what I am good at, maybe they lack of it. What they are good at, maybe I lack at it. We have all got our weaknesses to work on. . . . Well, really, I

> don't pay attention too much with people. Maybe when they ask question I might say, "oh, okay."

This position along the evolution of the meaning systems tends to be about feeling the limitations of the current meaning system, but not being able to construct anything beyond it yet—just knowing that there must be a different way to think and feel about things, and not wanting to be so caught by the concerns and issues that feel so ultimate and fundamental to who one is. The student here is concerned with the commonalities of the group, that "we are all here for the same goal to learn English better," and at the same time tends to distance himself from the others when he says "I don't pay attention too much with people." In that, there is the sense that he is trying not to be quite so identified with the group.

In the next phase of the transition, 3/4, the student appreciates both that the group members are respectful of each other so there is a sense of belonging and commonality, and at the same time that they are so diverse, that they are not all the same:

> Because—I mean, one teacher and then one student can't do the job. You have to be diverse. A different group. You know what I mean? A group—a bunch of people. We learn from each other. You know, we learn from each other. We . . . appreciate our—our work we done, so we appreciate our friendship. You know, we've been . . . very respectful to . . . each other, so we learn to do that, because we're not kids. We—we are adults. So we not make fun of people by saying stuff like if they don't know what to say. . . . So, we [are] polite. Maybe after the class, we may teasing each other a little bit. This is something we all do. So we do appreciate each other. . . . So I—I will miss—I will miss everybody. You know, after the class. And then I will hope—I really hope, you know, we can still keep in contact. I mean contact, you know, calling each other, you know, things like that—to see . . . how we doing, you know.

This student puts the emphasis on the relationships and friendships that the group has made possible. Even as he appreciates the diversity and acknowledges that "you have to be diverse," so that "We learn from each other," this student experiences also a sense of sameness among all the group members as he talks about them as one entity—"we . . . appreciate our work we done;" " we appreciate our friendship;" "we've been . . . very respectful to each other, so we learn to do that, because we're not kids." There is the sense of oneness in the "we," that we are all the same. The acknowledgment of differences in the context of sameness is indicative of the transitional phase of 3/4

As the transition continues and the balance shifts toward the Self-Authoring way of knowing, 4/3, the Self-Authoring system becomes more of a critique of the student's own behavior and feelings:

> I see that I can connect with Asian students. I can talk with them. I see that I can learn a lot of them, from them. It's so interesting, and it's important that it's like open me. I am feeling that I'm not limited anymore that I like now. At first, I thought that we are very different from each other. And I thought that people from, I don't know, China, they listen only that kind of music. And then I asked that girl, "Have you ever heard about Madonna and Michael Jackson?" and when she told me

> that they actually heard about Madonna, about, I was like, "Oh, really?" When I came here, when I meet my friend, he's American, and he asked me, "Have you ever heard about Tupac?" And my sister, she had a room full of his pictures and his book, and I was like, I was like, "Are you crazy?" I even get mad. "How can you ask me something like that?" And then I was thinking, "Hey and you asked that Chinese girl if she have heard, and . . . " And I tried to compare how was I thinking about that people, about some other people that's not from my country, and, and then I start to compare how I behave, according to them. That's opened me. That's why I am feeling it's opened me. I don't feel like I'm limited anymore. I feel like I'm just born again. And I'm really grateful for that opportunity to see that, to see so many different people. And I'm just here one year. Can you imagine that? So, I practically didn't see anything yet because, you know, the first one, the first year, you don't even know where you are. And, I'm always more open. That's what I like about school.

The emphasis becomes more and more focused on being able to critique one's own attitudes and knowledge and intentions. Comparing her own behavior to her reactions to the same questions posed to her demonstrates her new capacity to step back from her own feelings and reactions to see them in a wider context—both to critique her own behavior and stay tuned in to and concerned about the feelings and experience of the other.

In the final transitional phase of this segment of the continuum the 4(3) position has as its essential characteristic, the warding off of the psychological tug back to the old, i.e., Socializing way of knowing. There is often a certain kind of defensiveness inherent in this position that might sound something like this:

> [I] enjoy them [the group]. Most of them have wonderful ideas and they wanna [be good] parents too. Of course anytime anywhere . . . if you new, kind of shock, embarrass in a way, but then you get used to it, they so friendly . . . Sometimes we learn stuff from other parents, new ideas and information . . . Oh I give you an example. Like they have a how to be a good parent. Last time we discuss. When [my son] want to read a book or whatever, or colored pencils, if he don't like it, perhaps you put it away for a while and then try to make something else for him to do instead of let him sit there and get bored with it and throw things around. So just pick something out and later jump back to the topic again. So you can just go back anytime, instead of "no, you can't do it." We discuss about it in parenting class last time. And we get different ideas from other parents . . . I listen to other people's opinions and ideas, but compare their ideas and my ideas . . . think about it see what would happen . . . [but] I don't pay attention, I've never been too concerned about them [about what the other cohort members think] . . . I think I'm enjoy too much of what I had learned to so I don't pay attention to other people that much.

This father's orientation is to really appreciate the ideas and the companionship of the other parents at Even Start, to "listen to other people's opinions and ideas, but compare their ideas to my ideas . . . think about it see what would happen." He seems to be saying that he appreciates the ideas other people have, but always wants to think them over to see how they compare with his own and think about how they might work out. He is essentially bringing the other parents' ideas to his own set of standards and values. The slight defensiveness is in his assertion that "I don't pay attention to other people that much."

As the evolution continues and the last of the previous meaning system fades, that defensive quality fades as well and the person sounds and feels more contained within him or herself, more settled, more at ease in incorporating others' opinions or not. (This is not to say that all conflicts and difficulties evaporate. In fact, they do not. The same content that is the stuff of our lives continues with us all along the way. Our relationship to it changes and we might develop new strategies for dealing with it and sometimes can transform it to something more benign and less troubling, but development does not make difficult issues go away.) The Self-Authoring meaning system now generates its own values and preferences and best ways of doing things. The opinions and expectations of others matter, but are not definitive, and can be accepted and mulled over with less sense of losing one's own way. There is a more matter-of-factness about differences between oneself and others and an emphasis more one's interest in learning new things. The group becomes the context for such learning. We repeat the previously quoted illustration of this meaning system:

> I leave [Even Start] last year . . . I transfer to the other program . . . but I don't like what they teaching, no . . . because I saw [it was] back too down. [It was too simple?] Yes . . . and when I went there . . . this is what it looked to me like wasting time and I left . . . [I was learning more at Even Start] . . . yes, we studied social studies, science, history . . . [You wanted more information about subjects, than just about reading and writing?] Yes, exactly, that's it . . . [At Even Start] we have different nationalities there, you know, from Africa, from the Caribbean, from Europe, even from United States . . . So we look like United Nations there. That was wonderful . . . studying different cultures, different history, what it is exactly the people, how they live in different areas . . . Yes, we all of the time talk about culture, especially what is the government of the country, how they are run, what they do.

These brief quotations represent only a fraction of the countless ways that individuals can and do express and articulate their ways of knowing, and only one of infinite contexts within which adults continue to learn and grow and evolve.

THE CONTEXT OF GROWTH: THE HOLDING ENVIRONMENT

As noted in the principles of the Constructive-Developmental perspective, none of this evolution occurs in a vacuum, but does so in the context of the holding environment, the dynamic social and educational environment in which every individual finds him or herself, and in particular, that environment created by the three programs in our study. Ideally, in two of its functions, holding on and letting go, a holding environment both supports and challenges the process of learning for its students, facilitates the transformation and evolution of their meaning systems, and provides a context for their developing competence.

Holding environments can be helpful to a person's growth, thwarting, or both. The ways in which they can be most helpful is to provide an optimal balance of challenge and support (Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1982, 1994). An optimal balance of challenge and support means challenging students to stretch the limits of their understanding to consider and integrate new information, while supporting the students by having that information presented in a way that is accessible to them and their current meaning system. If that balance is not struck within a reasonable range and a person is challenged beyond his capacity to succeed or understand, he will most likely feel demoralized and defeated, unable to attain the expectations set out for him. If a person is overly supported, she might feel bored, disheartened by lack of challenge, and tune out. Either way, the holding environment has lost both an important connection with the student and the ability to provide an effective opportunity for his or her growth.

Creating a holding environment which provides this optimal balance for a whole classroom can be a challenge, for what feels supportive for one person might feel too challenging for another. Teachers from classrooms at every level will recognize this problem. We will argue throughout this monograph that to understand the developmental continuum along which every student travels will greatly enhance an educator's efforts to create an environment that can provide a good balance of challenge and support for most, if not all, of its students; in Chapter Six, we will take an in-depth look at how one such environment was created by a complex interaction of the teachers and the students themselves.

The next five chapters will take the reader into each of the three sites of our study through the voices of the participants as they share their experiences in their respective programs. Our developmental perspective serves as our guide through the complex plurality of voices and experiences and creates the context in which to understand the many other contributing factors that make up these adult students' lives.

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CHAPTER FOUR

A Developmental View of ESOL Students' Identity Transitions in an Urban Community College

BY:
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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Music, for Sonja, is both a pathway for communicating across cultures and a vehicle for the expression of her personal power. A vivacious 21 year old woman from Southern Europe, Sonja longs to become a radio broadcaster. Sonja expresses her conviction that she will "prove herself" by succeeding in her chosen career and playing the music she likes for broad audiences. Sonja, whose pragmatism matches her zeal for life, expresses excitement for the opportunity to pursue her dream in the U.S.—in her home country, there were no avenues open to her to study broadcasting. Here, she is enrolled in a community college that supports her goals through an interdisciplinary program in communications. Her personal ambition comes at a cost to Sonja, who left many friends behind in her home country. Because she values her friendships deeply, and requires of her friends "complete honesty," she has sorely missed these close connections. She tells us she has had trouble making friends in the U.S. because her standards for open, sometimes confrontational, communication in friendship differ considerably from those of the young adults she meets at school.

In the U.S., Sonja relies on her mother for honest conversation. This trusting relationship, she believes, depends on her mother being completely informed of her social experimentation (of which her mother disapproves). Her mother, like Sonja, is frank in sharing her opinions of Sonja's escapades but allows Sonja to make her own choices. In her second semester of community college, Sonja begins dating a man in whom she feels comfortable confiding. As we left Sonja in the spring of her first year, she had come to rely on his companionship and counsel.

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When we first met Gilles, a 23 year old Caribbean man, he was working through a decision to focus his studies either on journalism or pharmacy. Journalism, he believed, offered opportunities to help the people of his native country express their needs and views to a larger world. Gilles worries continuously about his native country, thinking about both the nation at large and the friends he left behind. Since he left home, he has coped with the tragic deaths of both friends and family. Both his parents have died, and he misses them deeply and often feels angry over his loss. His dearest friend from his home country died after an acute illness, and Gilles only learned of his death when he called his friend's home to consult with him on a school-related dilemma. Another friend drowned after drinking heavily and falling into a river. Gilles' worries extend to other friends whose risky behaviors make him fear for their well-being. Reserved and often morose, Gilles tells us that many of his *friends back home engage in "smoking, drinking, staying out late, acting crazy, drinking and driving." By Gilles' second semester, he has decided on a career in health care. Gilles has declared a major in biology, en route to becoming a pharmacist. His current goal is to transfer to a four-year college. He tells us he aims to earn enough money to take care of his own needs and those of his future desired family.*

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For the past two years, as researchers, we have been attending to the experiences of adult international ESOL students whose decisions to further their opportunities through expanding their literacy skills resulted in their enrollment in a community college program tailored to their own chosen purposes. To differing degrees and in various ways, the program they chose met their needs and often supported them in expanding their view of their own goals for themselves. This expansion of their personal horizons, through the encounter with larger views of their possibilities, and the acquisition of skills that scaffolded the accomplishment of novel goals, constitutes a form of what we think of as a "perspective shift"—a significant, qualitative change in the enduring cognitive, emotional and moral frameworks through which students make sense of their experience.

Perspective shifts are at the heart of both transformative learning as an experience and lifespan developmental psychology as a discipline. "In transformative learning . . . we reinterpret an old experience (or a new one) from a new set of expectations, thus giving a new meaning and perspective to the old experience" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 11). Understanding how students' perspectives shift in the direction of perceiving greater possibilities for themselves and towards enhanced capability to accomplish those possibilities is a shared concern of both teachers and researchers.

As our research progressed, perspective shifts of different forms became the focus of our inquiry. For Sonja and Gilles, these shifts took unique turns and led to new pursuits in various life arenas. Sonja came to view her relationships in new ways, allowing more room for collaboration and nuanced communication in her friendships while gaining confidence in herself as a student leader. Gilles' attention gradually shifted from a focus on the life he had left behind in Haiti to an emerging long-term plan for his new life in the U.S. that was grounded in a commitment to his higher education and professional future. With these shifts came losses in extant views of self and sources of self-worth, and new commitments to American value systems that compromised prior loyalties to the cultural mores of their home countries.

The focal point for our interest in these perspective shifts was the participants' experiences of themselves as adult learners. The question that drew our attention, enlivened our thinking and crystallized our interpretations of our data became: *How do the participants in our study come to believe in themselves as students, and through that belief, act in ways that make their learning more effective?* While such a question seems to assume that participants' lives would necessarily be enhanced by their U.S. community college experience, we let the participants make this interpretation for us. Generally, they expressed a satisfaction with their choices and the direction their lives were taking. However, their narratives of change were not as straightforward as the conclusions they drew for us about their overall experiences. We see it as our responsibility to present their stories of change as multifaceted, consistent with the ways in which they were told to us over time—emphasizing that every shift that allowed new possibilities also outlawed old ways of being that had brought comfort and consistency to their lives. Developmental psychologist Mary Baird Carlsen (1988) lends credence to the complexity of the participants' transitions in her characterization of the inner experience of personal change:

> what made sense before, what held life together, what provided patterns of significance and intentionality, has broken apart thrusting these individuals into a transitional stage between the old and the new. This can be very frightening; after all, even though the old way is no longer working, at least it was known. (p. 3)

Change, as adult learners experience it, means the reconstruction of whole ways of knowing and the tentative embrace of new forms of meaning that have not yet proven their enduring worth.

Our orienting question also apparently preferences the study of personal agency over the exploration of institutional agendas and their influence over student experience (even though the two are very much intertwined). Educational institutions such as the community college we studied are often characterized (especially by critical theorists) as vehicles for the transmission of cultural mores or as agencies of reinforcement of existing power structures (Shaw, Valadez & Rhoads, 1999; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996). Nonetheless, the individual learner remains the recipient of these messages and the subject of these recreations of (potentially oppressive) cultural systems. Cultural and political systems of belief do flood the collective consciousness, yet individual students experience this influence in the domain of personal consciousness. The domain of personal consciousness is where we believe agency is housed. In other words, the individual's will to act is experienced as a personal choice and can be explored systematically as a personal choice. Our choice to explore individual agency as demonstrated by students in our study does not negate the influence of powerful cultural forces. Instead, it assumes their presence and then asks how individuals, who are not yet beneficiaries of cultural revolutions that might obviate the need to act against the "system," still manage to negotiate for themselves movements within the system which they personally characterize as life-enhancing. It is these life-enhancing movements that capture our attention.

Kathleen Shaw, in her exploration of identity development in community college settings, reflects our perspective:

> Yet as theorists have begun to grapple with the somewhat deterministic relationship which these [critical] theories draw between specific social categories and identity, some have begun to express discontent, arguing that 'race, class and gender are not . . . the bottom line explanation to which all life may be reduced' (Denning, 1992, p.38). Indeed, there has emerged the sense that there are different kinds of difference, and that, along with both social categories and social structure, *individual agency*—that is, the ability to make conscious choices—has a role in identity formations . . . [T]his . . . theory of identity (also referred to as a theory of human agency) does not negate the power of race, gender or class in determining the ways in which we define ourselves and are defined by others; it simply adds a category of "difference" that is determined by individual agency, by choice. . . . (Shaw, 1999, p. 156)

By this, Shaw means that there are important forms of difference amongst those who share membership in underrepresented or oppressed groups that require our understanding if we are to make sense of how people purposefully pursue their dreams for their lives in spite of the conspiracy of class, race, cultural, or gender inequities. She continues,

> Certainly, issues of oppression and domination are critical to community college students, and in some ways may be the most important aspects of identity to address. However, by focusing exclusively on identities as defined primarily in terms of race, gender, or class, institutions can become blinded to other critical aspects of students' identities. (Shaw, 1999, p. 166)

In our own work as developmentalists we locate some of these important "aspects of identity" in the forms of perspectives (or systems of meaning) individual students bring to bear on their experiences. We are interested as well in how and when these perspectives shift. We associate certain telltale or characteristic forms of meaning making with particular levels of consciousness development. We imagine we can tell you something about the organization of an individual's meaning system based on what we know about his or her cognitive, emotional, or moral developmental position. And our framework suggests that there are important associations between the presence of certain levels of consciousness and the resultant power and flexibility of individual agency.

We take it as our task here to demonstrate, through argument and presentation of evidence informed by a developmental analysis, just how these differences in consciousness development matter to the forms of agency the students in our study demonstrate and what these differences might mean for their engagement in life-enhancing choices and activities. This chapter thus adds to the overall discussion threading through the monograph on the contributions a developmental psychological perspective can provide adult basic education. We focus on the perspective shifts the participants in our study recount, and on how a developmental framework accounts for the presence of certain important forms of change and the absence of others. To that end, we elaborate on our orienting question by also asking persistently:

- How do students' developmental positions influence the ways in which they negotiate common transitions (such as entry into a new culture of learning, or the accomplishment of life tasks associated with emerging adulthood)?

- What distinguishes students who make these transitions successfully from those who struggle to complete them?

- What forms of psychological risk do students associate with negotiating these transitions?

- In what ways does the community college support diverse students through common, desired transitions? In what ways does it create barriers to positive change?

And

- How might faculty, program developers, and policymakers anticipate the risks and barriers to change and thereby improve the supports they offer to diverse students?

This final question requires speculation on the application of our findings to the practice of developmental education in ABE settings, and will be taken up in our discussion of the implications of our study on future practice.

Background on the Setting

Our study took place at Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), a Boston-area urban college well regarded for its programmatic attention to supporting self-directed learning and for its pioneering programs for ESOL students. During the period when we were investigating site options, we learned of a pilot program being initiated at BHCC that would provide international ESOL students with an opportunity to register as a cohort for a set of courses that would reinforce English acquisition through both direct language instruction in ESOL coursework combined with application of English skills in a tailored, introductory-level psychology course. The program developers welcomed research in their setting to further their own understanding of whether and how enrolled students of various cultural backgrounds and educational histories made positive gains in English fluency and demonstrated transfer of literacy skills to academic work. Our research efforts got underway shortly after the fall semester began; we followed the cohort through the end of their initial academic year. (See Chapter Two for a complete description of our methods.)

The community college drew many of the participants in our study because of its proximity to the city, its welcoming stance toward international students, its numerous programs of study, and its interest in supporting students who aim to transfer to four-year colleges. All programs of study (including Associate in Arts (A.A.) degrees, Associate in Science (A.S.) degrees, and certificate programs) require coursework from four areas: General Education requirements, program requirements, career electives, and liberal arts electives. While participants were familiar with the range of requirements, they tended in all conversations with us to focus their comments about program content on the career electives. Those who aimed to transfer to four-year colleges matriculated in the Associate in Arts concentrations. Those who expressed an interest in moving directly on to work experience registered in certificate programs focused on skill training and "job upgrade opportunities" (BHCC Website, 2001). Of the more than 20 certificate options for students, most of the participants in our study focused on business, computer or electronics technology, health, hospitality, or office information management.

Participants at this site range in age from (18 to 39) and come from 10 different countries and four continents (see Table 1).

Table 1: Background of Participants[1]

Name	Gender	Age	Years in U.S.	Region of Origin	SOI Time 1	SOI Time 2[2]	Other Information
Yousef	M	Late 30s	1 1/2	Africa	N/A	2(3)-2/3	Completed high school in Africa. Married without children. Lives with friends in U.S. Wife lives in Africa. Works at least part-time.
Xuan	F	Late teens	16	Asia	2/3	N/A	Lives with her family. Finished high school in U.S.
Minh	F	Mid 20s	2	Asia	3/2	N/A	Left Asia four months before finishing a university degree in economics. Lives with her family. Works part time.
Gilles	M	Early 20s	2	Caribbean	2ish	2/3-3/2	Both parents are deceased. Lives with aunt, two sisters, and a cousin. Completed high school in U.S. Works part-time.
Abdel	M	Mid 20s	2 1/2	Africa	3	3/2-3	Lives with his family. Completed high school in Africa. Works part-time.
Ling-Hui	F	Late teens	4 mos.	Asia	3(2)	N/A	Lives with aunt and uncle. Completed high school in Asia.
Jonas	M	Mid 20s	4	Central America	3	N/A	Finished high school in El Salvador. Lives with other Spanish-speaking young men. Works full-time.
Armand	M	N/A	1 1/2	Africa	3	3	Finished high school and two years of university in Africa. Lives with sister and her child. Works at least part-time.
Tak-Jang	M	Mid 20s	1	Asia	3	N/A	Lives with his family. Finished high school in Asia. Works at least part-time.

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[1] See Chapter 2 for a description of SOI measure data collection procedures. Age and Years in U.S. are calculated from the time of our first set of participant interviews, 10/8/98.

[2] At the time of our last data collection, we were unable to contact 6 of the 17 participants. We do not have reliable information about whether these students were still enrolled at the college or whether these students had transferred or discontinued their studies. Of the remaining 11, one student elected not to participate in the entire set of interviews.

(Table 1 Continued)

Name	Gender	Age	Years In U.S.	Region of Origin	SOI Time 1	SOI Time 2	Other Information
Natalia	F	Late teens	1	Europe	3	3	Lives with her parents. Finished high school in Europe. Works at least part-time.
Fawzia	F	Mid 20s	1 1/2	Africa	3	3	Lives alone. Family lives in Africa. Finished high school in Africa. Works part-time.
Benetta	F	N/A	N/A	Central America	3 or 3/4	N/A	Lives with husband. Works part-time.
Gabriela	F	Early 20s	3	Central America	3-3/4	3 or 3/4	Finished two years of university in Central America. Lives with parents and brother, then moves to an apartment with other students. Works at least part-time, sometimes full-time.
Marie	F	Early 20s	N/A	Caribbean	3 or 3/4	3/4	Lives with uncle and cousins. Completed high school in U.S. Works part-time.
Sonja	F	Early 20s	1	Europe	4/3	3/4-4/3	Finished high school and started to study law in Europe. Lives with family. Works part-time.
Serge	M	Mid 20s	5	Caribbean	4/3	4/3	Lives with uncle and cousins. Completed high school in the Caribbean. Works full-time.
Fei-Wen	F	Late 30s	1	Asia	4/3	N/A	Completed high school in Asia. Married without children. Lives with parents and brother. Husband lives in Asia. Works at least part-time.

At the time of our first data collection, 17 students (seven males, 10 females) were enrolled in the ESOL/Psychology program. Virtually all had lived in the United States for only a short period of time (ranging from four months to five years); only one student had spent most (16 years) of her life here. Seven lived with parents who had also immigrated. One lived with her husband, near her mother and stepfather.

Of the others whose parents had not come to the U.S., three lived with other family members, such as siblings, aunts, uncles, and/or cousins. Three lived alone or with friends. All participants had completed high school, and four had continued with some form of higher education in their home countries.

Like participants in the parent education and workplace literacy programs discussed in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, the participants in our study represent a mix of cultures and nationalities, chose to further their own learning through participation in an ESOL program, and were (for the most part) evidently struggling to communicate in English when their programs began. The participants in our study are unique across the broader study in that they are relatively younger, tell fairly positive stories of their formative educational experiences in their countries of origin, and have expressed ambitious educational goals for themselves beyond the ESOL program.

Aspects of Identity and Forms of Transition

Two other aspects of the participants' shared identity interest us in particular. First, they tend to be fairly new to the United States or to the American school experience and therefore inexperienced with its cultural norms for and expectations of how students and teachers ought to think and behave in learning environments. They are necessarily engaged in a shared process of acculturation that heightens their awareness of their existing perspectives while accentuating the changes in form these meaning systems necessarily undergo. Sociologist Howard London (1992) describes the process of acculturation non-native community college students go through as "requir(ing) a 'leaving off' and a 'taking on,' the shedding of one social identity and the acquisition of another. Usually this is a slow, incremental process, consisting of subtle and often tentative innovations in the conduct of everyday life" (1992, p. 8). As interested observers of these changes, we noted an unanticipated commonality in the ways in which participants described the perceived norms for study and participation in classroom life.

In one sense, this is evidence of the power of the forces of acculturation. The collective understanding expressed by the participants in our study of the expectations their teachers, peers, and advisors had of them suggests a rapid assimilation of social cues and, to some extent, an acceptance of these new norms as reasonable and even desirable. These new ways of understanding are in one sense invited by the participants in our study as they choose to enter the community college culture. Yet, it is equally true to say that forms of understanding are imposed on individuals by the culture they are entering. Recollecting her own transition from "the barrio to the academy," Mexican-American educational researcher Laura

Rendon (1999) reminds us that "pain . . . comes from cultural separation . . . To become academic success stories, we must . . . reject old values and traditions, mistrust our experience, and disconnect with our past. Ironically, the academy preaches freedom of thought and expression but demands submission and loyalty" (p. 62). For the participants in our study, the process of acculturation is thus met with a mix of motivated enthusiasm and resistance. We describe participants' acculturation experiences later in this chapter, as a means for providing indirect access to a critical conversation about how immigrant community college students variously engage and disengage with the expectations of a new culture.

In another sense, which we pursue more directly, the common understanding of academic mores shared by the participants in our study is evidence of the power of the normative forces of consciousness development, which tend in early adulthood to organize people's experiences around social norms and conventions for thinking and behaving. The participants in our study, whose modal developmental position places them near or at the "Socializing" stage of development, are highly invested in deciphering and acting through conventional forms of behavior and understanding. They demonstrate a developmental readiness for and inclination towards absorbing value systems and connecting to like-minded communities. We will explore how developmental position influences the participants' experiences of acculturation, both through shaping their interpretations of its demands upon them and by enabling their participation in mutually reinforcing social constructions of experience.

A second aspect of the participants' shared identity that shapes the direction of our analysis is the phenomenon of common life phase—most of the participants in our study, who differ greatly in cultural background and personal history, are collectively living through their young adulthood. In our own U.S. culture, we are somewhat fascinated by life phases, generational cohorts and all they signify about shared systems of value, and the normative tasks that accompany transition from one life phase to the next. In young adulthood, these tasks include establishing a community, determining a career direction, deepening intimate relationships, and forging an enduring identity. The participants in our study, when given free rein to speak on a topic of their choosing, endlessly return to these four domains of experience.

When we think of these domains as arenas for transition, we note that the participants in our study are actively engaged in making sense of how they might resolve emerging dilemmas and manage hoped for changes. Again, we were somewhat surprised by the collective urgent attention the participants in our study place on these four domains, as the phasic expectations commonly expressed by North American psychologists would not necessarily reflect the preoccupations of non-North American young adults. These expectations are, of course, heavily influenced by cultural expectations for normative growth. And, because these expectations are normative, those new to a culture may not "fit" the new environment's expectations for progress in relationship to a critical life phase or task. Conversely, those new to a culture may already have accomplished a phasic task "prematurely" by the normative standards of the new culture. The participants in our study are clearly engaged with these common tasks of young adulthood, yet their expectations for themselves do reflect still the norms of their home cultures. For example, many of the participants in our study express dismay at the perceived North American insistence on individuation from the family of origin during early adulthood.

In the U.S., initiating the college experience is often considered a phasic task, the accomplishment of which solidifies a young adult's separation from home and family. In our study overall, the community college setting serves to illustrate some of the unique challenges immigrant young adults have in constructing an identity and choosing a life path while simultaneously encountering a new culture. We look in this chapter at how the participants in our study make sense of these challenges, employing a developmental interpretation of why certain tasks both fascinate and stymie young adults from diverse cultures who share a common developmental stage.

A Developmental Lens

Developmental approaches to education fundamentally address processes of change and how they are supported. For the most part, developmentalists view change as potentially beneficial and typically non-negotiable (in the sense that there is much demand for people to continue to adapt to an ever-evolving cultural surround). Some forms of change are preferenced as signaling desired kinds of growth in consciousness capacity and self-integration. The form and trajectory of these changes are said to be universal. The college experience is typically designed to intentionally support a form of consciousness change in students that moves them from an embeddedness in the norms and values of their families or cultures of origin towards a critical capacity to determine for themselves what they value and believe.

Students in community college are engaged in negotiating the transition to a new culture, to a new phase of life, and through a particular level of development. Our setting encapsulates all these types of changes. The demands placed on adult learners in this setting by these three forms of transition are considerable. Throughout the upcoming review of our findings, we will maintain that these three forms of transition intersect, yet that the forms of consciousness the participants in our study demonstrate are predictive of the ways in which they experience changes in cultural expectations or life tasks.

We also maintain that an unacceptable alternative to engaging in transition, as the participants in our study courageously do, is stasis. When change is required by the culture, life phase, or developmental agenda, stasis signals a threat to the balance of the individual psychological system. Sometimes, the energy required to bring about change comes from the pain initiated by failing to change. The participants in our study are asked to take up several forms of challenging change simultaneously. To manage this demand successfully, they will require an appropriate set of supports. The program we selected for study is designed to help students move through these critical transitions. We will also explore the developmental appropriateness of the forms of support provided by the program—how it functions as a "holding environment" for student transitions.

To successfully provide a meaningful analysis of how forms of transition are negotiated by adult learners, we need first to more fully outline what our framework entails and how we justify its applicability to our setting.

SECTION II: RESEARCH ON AND FRAMEWORKS OF ADULT STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDINGS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

In traditional settings of higher education the adult learner is expected to grow in her capacity to think critically while broadening her span of knowledge to include the core claims of diverse disciplines. Ideally, the adult learner will also master a particular discipline or trade that will form a foundation for later professional or personal development. In adult education more generally (in its various guises from community-based literacy centers to workplace training programs), there is not usually a similar emphasis on the growth of critical thinking or the transformation of mind. Yet, if there is a key learning from research on traditional settings of higher education that is broadly applicable to adult education in all settings, it is this: Adult learners can undergo important transformations of their perspectives that shape the way they understand, respond to, and (sometimes) resist education. Like children and adolescents, adult learners can anticipate having the ground of understanding shift as they engage in learning experiences that challenge their existing frame of mind. Like schoolteachers, educators of adults benefit from understanding the form these shifts will take and what forms of supportive instruction will elicit them. To expand the mission of adult basic education to include attention to transformations of mind, educators in these areas might benefit from becoming familiar with the insights of developmental research done in higher educational settings.

While developmental theory has looked at length at how intellectual capacity unfolds in childhood and adolescence, more recent work in the trajectory of adult development has begun to sketch how these stages unfold for adult learners. Developmental educators who have studied adult learning have concentrated on the transformations of mind college students undergo across four years of a liberal arts education. In the various frameworks constructed through research, developmental educators aim to explicate the stages or phases that learners go through (ideally or in practice) as they expand their possibilities for critical thinking. These theories replicate those of developmental child educators in their conviction that learners' minds undergo qualitative changes that are predictable and measurable, that certain environments support the gradual constructions of new ways of understanding, and that change overall moves in the direction from lesser to greater awareness of the core assumptions one brings to any learning engagement. While in theory development can be supported through varying stages for groups of learners, in practice we see that students come to school with differing needs for support, challenge, and pace of growth.

For educators who are aiming to make good design decisions about the content, rhythm, and structure of curriculum for adults, it is useful to have some guiding frameworks for how (and how quickly) adult learners tend to move through stages in understanding toward ever greater capacities for critical thinking and seasoned judgment. The primary lens through which a student encounters educational experience, and how he understands what the enterprise of learning and teaching is all about, will have much to do with his friendliness to certain ideas and the forms of their presentation, his readiness to shift his own perspective when it is called for educationally, and his willingness to reach for new forms of knowing that he may recognize but not yet preference.

Educators who interest themselves in the expansion of the learner's mind as well as the transmission of knowledge are fundamentally developmental in their orientation. Research that brings a developmental perspective to adult learners' experiences has been ongoing for over 30 years, in various settings with different populations of adult learners participating. Many of these studies bring to bear a "neo-Piagetian" perspective on the conceptualization of how learners move through eras of understanding. While Piaget himself concentrated on depicting the processes and stages of growth from infancy through adolescence, the basic premises of his theoretical perspective hold true for adults as well. These researchers take on the question of how students construct the educational enterprise, including a) how students understand the nature of knowledge (what are its sources; whose knowledge is authoritative; who constructs it; how does it change?); b) how they conceive of their own and their teachers' responsibilities in an ongoing process of learning and teaching; c) how they understand differences in perspectives on knowledge among students and teachers, or disagreements among students or among the faculty; d) how they trace their own changes in perspective over time and what meaning they make of shifts in their own understanding.

Many researchers in this area (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Belenky et al., 1986; Kegan, 1982, 1994; King & Kitchener, 1994; and Weathersby, 1980) state their intellectual indebtedness to William Perry (1970), who was the first developmentalist to explore adult students' meaning-making and to cast his understandings into a predictive framework. Perry did much to set the terms of how later, parallel explorations of adult students' meaning-making would be designed. To understand student perspectives, he employed in-depth interviewing over time, looking to see how student frameworks might change as their education proceeded. Gleaning that the students were the best representatives of their own thinking processes, he let the data tell him how best to discriminate between "positions" the students took and how to represent the overall direction of their growth. (He named nine positions his largely male Harvard undergraduates described over the course of their four years of undergraduate education.) Perry was equally interested in the setbacks students encountered and how they described the challenges to growth that slowed or stalled progress. He named three "alternatives to growth"—temporizing, retreat, and escape—which students described in the course of trying to explain why they were not yet where they themselves thought they should be. And he named the processes and supports students described as being most helpful to them in their resumption of growth.

In later work, other educational researchers interested in similar questions largely followed Perry's lead in structuring their research, laying out their frameworks, and identifying critical success factors that support or prohibit growth. Later researchers also attended to perspectives that Perry's work did not sufficiently address, including those of women, students of different socioeconomic backgrounds, and students in nontraditional educational settings. In our own study, we add the perspectives of students from diverse cultural backgrounds who are ESOL students in a community college setting.

Each of these frameworks is built on the assumption that the positions identified emerge sequentially, predictably, and consistently within the population the researcher was describing. Because the researchers share a foundation in Piagetian psychology and an indebtedness to Perry's seminal work, there are evident similarities across the models. What follows is a thematic review of key claims shared by these frameworks about the nature, timing, and process of adult development in higher educational settings. While each theorist makes particular claims about how students in their sample make sense of knowledge, educational authority, and their own participation in the educational process, the similarities among the core premises from which these researchers work are important. Fundamentally, these frameworks are useful to teachers and researchers who can apply the collective wisdom about how student understandings are transformed to practice or inquiry.

These frameworks have served to collectively guide our understanding of how learners in our study make sense of their experiences as students throughout the first year of their participation in a program somewhat tailored to their educational and developmental needs. They have been useful to us on three levels: first, they help frame our own expectations of how student development might proceed if the necessary supports are in place; second, they alert us to differences between the participants in our study and those in prior studies in the content of their concerns or the trajectory of their growth; and third, they provide a window into the expectations that are tacitly held by educators who are dedicated to transformational frameworks. Because the participants in our study are coming to American higher education from diverse international primary and secondary school experiences, and because American higher education does preference the development of critical thinking, we can see how the students in our study are effectively acculturated into norms of development as they absorb, communicate, and test the cultural mores being introduced to them though the learning and teaching process.

The spirit of this section is not an exhaustive review of each of these perspectives nor a rich critique of the important differences among them. Instead, it is an opportunity to set forth some formative claims about what is required of adult learners and teachers in higher educational settings. These claims will serve as a backdrop against which we will then set out our own data from international students at BHCC. Our experiences interviewing 17 learners from 10 countries who speak English as a second language both reinforce consistencies in the adult learning research to date and raise new questions for existing frameworks.

Five Core Premises

Developmental educators who derive their pedagogy from neo-Piagetian premises are fundamentally committed to seeing learners as active constructors of knowledge. Like Piaget, they are interested in the connections between what learners claim to know and how they think they know what they know. These are questions of epistemology as well as of education, and derived from them are a set of core premises which most developmentalists would recognize as essential to their approach to making sense of the adult learner's enterprise. They include the premises that:

1. **Students bring deeply held assumptions about the nature of knowledge to the educational enterprise. These assumptions are personal yet they mirror philosophical claims about the nature of knowledge that have been manifested throughout history which have driven larger cultural frames of meaning and inquiry.**

2. **Students' assumptions about the nature of knowledge are epistemic commitments which influence their goals for themselves as learners, their understanding of the role of student and teacher, their interactions with knowledgeable authorities (texts, teachers), and their satisfactions with the learning enterprise.**

3. **Students' understanding of the nature of knowledge does and should change as they become more sophisticated in their habits of mind. The change should be directed toward greater recognition of the constructed nature of knowledge and away from naïve conceptions of knowledge as received or instantiated. Students should increase their ability to consider and deliberate on the "goodness" of any claim to knowledge based on the premises behind it and the suitability of the argument made for it.**

4. **Changes in students' epistemic commitments do not unfold naturally. Learners in general resist change in their ways of knowing and adult students sometimes experience injuries to their identity when change is facilitated.**

5. **Because change is desirable but readily resisted, developmental educators have to facilitate change through the provision of appropriate challenges to students' current understandings. To offset the potentially damaging impact of extreme challenge, developmental educators must also structure useful and timely supports to students who are being asked to stretch their current conceptual frameworks.**

While developmental educators hold these premises in common, they argue for them based on very different sources of data. The forms of similarity in experience that emerge from studies of very diverse adult populations support the robustness of the core premises while outlining common needs among adult learners in different settings. Let's look at these one at a time, considering how a range of theorists define the essential message of the premise and how it is supported in their data.

Premise 1: Students bring deeply held assumptions about the nature of knowledge to the educational enterprise. These assumptions are personal yet they mirror philosophical claims about the nature of knowledge that have been manifested throughout history which have driven larger cultural frames of meaning and inquiry.

Beginning with William Perry, developmental educators have brought forward to the study of adult learning Piaget's central preoccupation with how queries into the nature of knowledge and the processes that drive human development are interdependent. Piaget's studies of how children make sense of their empirical observations of the natural and social worlds were grounded in his fascination with how systems of meaning unfold in formal disciplines such as logic, science, and mathematics. He took the young child to be the analogue of the scientist-philosopher, whose observations were constrained by the network of assumptions he brought to empirical inquiry. Piaget aimed to discover, through observation and careful interviewing of his young subjects, how they came to make faulty claims, so persistently and consistently, about cause and effect in natural and social phenomena. He saw these claims as based in naïve but internally consistent epistemologies; children were like primitive peoples in their understanding of how the world worked before the advent of more scientifically organized modes of thinking. He argued that the epistemic commitments that children brought to their observations and which changed throughout the course of their own development mirrored the evolution of different worldviews throughout history. Especially relevant to later studies of adult learning were Piaget's foundational explorations of children's social and moral worlds—how they made sense of social roles, rules, the origins of authority, and their underlying justifications for right action.

While many educators might argue that these concerns are only indirectly related to the processes of education, developmentalists maintain that they are central to understanding the development of the adult mind in educational contexts. As Belenky and her colleagues (1986) note in their introduction to "Women's Ways of Knowing,"[3]

> We do not think of the ordinary person as preoccupied with such difficult and profound questions as: What is truth? What is authority? To whom do I listen? What counts for me as evidence? How do I know what I know? Yet to ask ourselves these questions and to reflect on our answers is more than intellectual

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[3] The book summarized their research with 135 women who were engaged in a variety of forms of adult learning. Roughly two thirds were enrolled in formal academic settings, roughly one third were affiliated with programs offered by community agencies.

> exercise, for our basic assumptions about the nature of truth and reality and the origins of knowledge shape the way we see the world and ourselves as participants in it. They affect our definitions of ourselves, our sense of control over life events, our views of teaching and learning, and our conceptions of morality. (p. 3)

Developmental educators who work with adults view the transformation of mind as the primary aim of education. Schema for organizing how learners' minds transform are proffered by most researchers who study adults in educational settings. These schema are organized around positions students take in relationship to their views of themselves as knowers. These positions are then elaborated and their influence on students' views on learning and teaching more generally are articulated. These positions are commonly associated with particular levels of the students' consciousness development that can be systematically assessed. Fundamentally, it is the identification of students first as knowers that sets apart developmental schemes from other prescriptive models of adult learning. And, it is the claim that teaching in these settings is fundamentally about enhancing students' capacities to know in larger ways that marks the prescriptive mindset of developmental education.

The levels described by multiple theorists are roughly analogous, although special concerns of particular populations can result in the addition of levels or in the elaboration of multiple modes through which learners might describe their frameworks. Below, we summarize the levels identified by four models directly derived from studies of adult learners in primarily higher educational settings using a Piagetian perspective. Through the development of these schema, researchers both represent the real world of students' own descriptions of their knowing, while providing a rubric for locating students in the trajectory of their own development and for defining appropriate developmental challenges.

Level 1

Across these models, the descriptors vary, as do the number of levels represented. In the most global sense, however, it is possible to sketch a common trajectory that these schema share. Across the models, the first major "position," "level," or "stage[4]" is characterized primarily by the learners' commitment to an absolutist stance toward knowing. Knowledge is seen as "certain or absolute" (Baxter Magolda, 1992), where there is "no recognition of problems for which there are no absolutely true answers" (King & Kitchener, 1994). Learners who are poised at this developmental level understand knowledge to have empirical correlates: It is directly observable and based on facts not subjected to multiple interpretations. Learners who view knowing through this frame are philosophical dualists: they perceive a polar distinction between the true and the false. "From this position, a person construes all issues of truth and morality in the terms of a sweeping and unconsidered differentiation between in-group vs. outgroup. The division is between the familiar world of Authority-right-we, as against the alien world of illegitimate-wrong-others" (Perry, 1970, p. 59).

Several theorists note that proponents of this first position make up only a small percentage of learners' studied in adult educational settings. As a stance, it is highly undifferentiated. In Perry's view, "this set of assumptions may indeed be the simplest which a person in our culture may hold on epistemological and axiological matters and still be said to make any assumptions at all" (Perry, 1970, p. 59).

Level 2

With growth and differentiation, the absolutist shifts to a qualified stance on dualism. In what Baxter-Magolda names "transitional knowing," the learner recognizes that some knowledge is only "partially certain" (p. 30). This is a state brought about, in the learner's view, not by the relative nature of truth, but by the incomplete state of knowledge in certain disciplines or sub-disciplines. Knowledge will be complete, but that ideal state has not yet been realized by authorities in the field. Movement to this level signals an awareness or acknowledgement that uncertainties exist in what is known, yet not necessarily a tolerance for the incomplete state of knowledge. Rather, the learner "accords pluralism of thought and judgment the status of a mere procedural impediment intervening between the taking up of a problem and finding *the* answer" (Perry, 1970, p. 78).

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[4] The terms used by developmentalists vary, yet all represent an internally consistent frame of reference from which the learner interprets educational experience. Kegan's model, which forms the backdrop for this study, currently uses the term "level" to describe distinct developmental frameworks demonstrated by adult learners. This is the term we adopt.

Level 3

With further growth, the learner comes to understand that uncertainty of knowing is not dependent solely on the *status* of truth but has more to do with the *nature* of truth. Models vary in the number of levels named between dualism and the full emergence of "relativism" but are fairly consistent in their descriptions of this framework. Here the realization dawns that truth is not ultimate nor singular "but multiple and infinite" (Belenky, 1986, p. 63). In an ironic twist, the learner who previously embraced authority's perspective on truth as unquestionable now maintains that "all opinions are equally valid; everyone, including the self, has the capacity and the *right* to hold his or her own opinions" (Belenky, 1986, p. 63). The quality of the learner's feelings and attitudes about knowledge shift; the perspective moves from one of fair rigidity to an openness that reflects the tentative abandonment of authority:

> The word openness captures the essence of the core assumptions of independent knowers. They believed that knowledge was open to many interpretations, that people should be receptive to others' ideas, that instructors should be open to students' ideas, and that many possibilities existed in the choices confronting them. This openness facilitated the emergence of individually created perspectives because the risk of being wrong was eliminated. Because knowledge could be seen in so many ways, there was no obligation to make judgments about various views. Although independent knowers did make decisions about what to believe, they rarely identified criteria upon which these should be based. Thus, the independent knowers were free to think for themselves, and they could use their voices with minimum risk. Subsequently, they valued expressing their opinions in all realms of learning and expected others to do the same. (Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 146)

The development of relativism makes possible the beginnings of critical thinking. To reflect on her own assumptions or on the precepts of her community, a learner first must be able to detect the multiple assumptions that comprise any claim to truth. Yet to bring critical faculties fully to bear on the determination of which truth to preference, the learner must further develop standards and criteria by which to assess multiple claims to truth.

Level 4

In a final move common to adult learners in higher educational settings, the learner shifts from relativism to a formal appreciation of how context affects interpretation of what is truth-worthy, and how evidence can be weighed based on its origins and the rigor through which it is arrived. "Contextual knowers incorporated the exchange and comparison of views in their learning process, which was aimed at thinking through knowledge claims and integrating information in order to apply it within a context" (Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 177). The learner at this level makes use of authoritative views in a field as potential perspectives on which his own truth may be built, but not as voices which determine his view. Learners at this level have come to respect not the status of authority but the process through which an authoritative argument is constructed. Critical thinking is fully possible and the tools through which it can be readily applied are now meaningful for the learner.

The four levels briefly reviewed here collapse important transition steps and cloud interesting distinctions among models. Some models delineate multiple moves between these levels or identify differences in how sub-groups express their understanding of a position. For our purposes here, what matters is that the general trajectory of growth is understood, its epistemological underpinnings acknowledged, and prior work with adult learners who have substantiated these levels is recognized. The schema that researchers present to summarize their findings and to predict the developmental paths of learners in other settings prepare our understanding for the more particular implications of these models for how students understand the learning and teaching process.

Premise 2: Students' assumptions about the nature of knowledge are epistemic commitments which influence their goals for themselves as learners, their understanding of the role of student and teacher, their interactions with knowledgeable authorities (texts, teachers) and their satisfactions with the learning enterprise.

A learners' assumptions about the nature of knowledge can be assessed directly through probing conversations that ask learners to name and justify their own epistemic commitments. But for teachers generally, the more useful application of the insights of developmental perspectives lay with how learners' developmental positions influence their broader experience of the educational processes. Often, the most compelling evidence for a student's commitment to a particular position emerges from her expression of her expectations of her teachers, her discontent with her coursework, her stated confusion over academic requirements. What may first appear to be disconnected commentary on an array of experiences can be made to cohere when viewed through the lens of developmental theory. In a pure sense, it is useful to sketch how students understand the nature of knowledge and to anticipate how their understandings will change over time. In a practical sense, it is very much worth knowing how students' developmental positions shape their daily experiences and set particular challenges for teachers who aim to support their growth.

A primary focus of our own research has been how students view their own role and that of the teacher (or professor). These views appear to vary in consistent ways across developmental levels. Our observations are supported by work done by other researchers in the field, whose schema often include descriptions of how learners' levels of development influence their understanding of their responsibilities as students and their expectations for their teachers. Marcia Baxter Magolda (1992), for example, describes the perceived role of learner and of instructor for students she followed through a 4-year baccalaureate program in the mid-west United States (see Table 2).

Table 2: Levels of Development in Educational Settings

Domain	**Absolute Knowing** *(Level 1)*[5]	**Transitional Knowing** *(Level 2)*	**Independent Knowing** *(Level 3)*	**Contextual Knowing** *(Level 4)*
Role of learner	· Obtains knowledge from instructor	· Understands knowledge	· Thinks for self · Shares views with others · Creates own perspective	· Exchanges and compares perspectives · Thinks through problems · Integrates and applies knowledge
Role of instructor	· Communicates knowledge appropriately · Ensures that students understand knowledge	· Uses methods aimed at understanding · Employs methods that help apply knowledge	· Promotes independent thinking · Promotes exchange of opinions	· Promotes application of knowledge in context · Promotes evaluative discussion of perspectives · Student and teacher critique each other

Excerpted from Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 30.

With the emergence of new forms of knowing, the students in Baxter-Magolda's research shift not only their understanding of their own role but their preferences for methods of learning and for forms of instruction. At the extreme ends of the developmental spectrum, the potential discontinuities in learner preferences become most apparent. What is satisfying to an absolute knower who desires clear-cut information directly imparted from an authority will be a source of frustration for a contextual knower who wants to participate in the process of shaping what is known.

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[5] The bracketed level names are added here to demonstrate the link between Baxter Magolda's theory and Kegan's levels.

In learning environments where one position is implicitly preferenced, learners at other levels will likely be dissatisfied with the learning experience. Similarly, instructors who prefer a particular teaching style may find that their audience of learners resists their approach. As Tennant and Pogson (1995) note, "It is difficult to establish a genuine, student-centered, participative, and experiential teaching strategy in an environment where the emphasis is on the expertise and authority of the teacher" (summarizing Usher, p. 127). While educators often assume that the learning environment is established by the culture of the institution, it is also shaped by the habits of mind brought to the experience by learners themselves. Given these differences, educators may make decisions on instructional strategies that provide a range of opportunities for students with varying preferences. Recognizing this form of difference among students aids the design of educational experiences that more adequately address not only learner variation, but also enable the strategic support of growth in the direction of greater capacity, regardless of momentary learner preferences.

> The learning process and educational interventions—needs assessment and setting of objectives, determination of readiness for learning, program or curriculum development, instruction, and evaluation—are inherently different depending on . . . the intent of the learner . . . Although [multiple] domains of learning play a part in most learning experiences, emphasis on one or [a]nother calls for interventions appropriate to that domain. Education approaches appropriate for Instrumental learning often have been misapplied to communicative learning. (Mezirow, 1991, p. 226)

Mezirow's observations are born out in our study, where students at different levels of development demonstrate important differences in their preferences for approaches to instruction.

Premise 3: Students' understanding of the nature of knowledge does and should change as they become more sophisticated in their habits of mind. The change should be directed toward greater recognition of the constructed nature of knowledge and away from naïve conceptions of knowledge as received or instantiated. Students should increase their ability to consider and deliberate on the "goodness" of any claim to knowledge based on the premises behind it and the suitability of the argument made for it.

The models developmentalists put forward are not value neutral. Growth in these models is desirable; higher levels of development are viewed as advances that learners would be well served to accomplish. As with education generally, there are goals inherent in the developmentalists' perspective, and these preference steady movement in the direction of greater capacity.

> the word "growth" suggests that it is better to grow than to arrest growth or to regress . . . The values built into our scheme are those we assume to be commonly held in significant areas of our culture, finding their most concentrated expression in such institutions as colleges of liberal arts, mental health movements and the like. We happen to subscribe to them ourselves. We would argue, for example, that the final structures of our scheme express an optimally congruent and responsible address to the present state of man's predicament. These are statements of opinion. (Perry, 1970, pp. 44-45)

It is not, in other words, a commonly held opinion among this group of educators that a dualist's frame of reference and a contextualist's are equally adequate. It is probably fair to say that an adult learner who leaves a four-year college maintaining her dualism has been underserved by the institution. The normative stance taken by these models sets standards of accomplishment for learners and teachers both.

In research studies where data is collected longitudinally, data on the normative pace and timing of students' progressions through developmental levels is tracked. These benchmarks could allow comparisons across groups if participant cohorts could be considered comparable. To date, the various cohorts are so diverse as to make comparisons across studies and models difficult. Researchers who focus on previously unstudied cohorts, such as ESOL learners, cannot draw on prior work to determine normative levels for learners or to anticipate the timing of transitions to new developmental capacities. Given what is known, however, about the relationships between particular developmental levels and the emergence of critical thinking, we can assume that some of the explicit tasks of higher education will be better met by students who have demonstrated higher levels of growth.

Premise 4: Changes in students' epistemic commitments do not unfold naturally. Learners in general resist change in their ways of knowing and adult students sometimes experience injuries to their identity when change is facilitated.

Kegan (1994) reminds us that "only a fraction of the adults entering school programs do so with the hope or intention of personally growing from being in school. Most have what they (or we?) would consider far more *practical* goals" (p. 293). These do not typically include the complete reorganization of their fundamental belief system. "Learning is an ego threatening activity" (Weathersby, 1980, p. 21) in the sense that it can require that we relinquish the core convictions that we previously struggled to piece together and with which we have become fully identified. Challenges to our sense of our own knowing are experienced as threats to self. "Educators seeking 'self-direction' from their adult students are not merely asking them to take on new skills, modify their learning style, or increase their self-confidence. They are asking many of them to change the whole way they understand themselves, their world, and the relationship between the two" (Kegan, 1994, p. 275). Even the activity of engaging purposefully in self-change may feel alien to many learners, whose own developmental position may constrain their definition of education to exclude self-enhancement. Weathersby (1980) notes that the theme of self-development does not emerge in learners' own perspectives on their educational aims until her "Conscientious Stage," (similar to Kegan's Level 3) in which "education (becomes) an experience that affects a person's inner life" (1980, p. 13). Prior to this development, learners express far more utilitarian perspective on their aims for education. Perry (1970) suggests that "personal will" is required for learners to unmake and reconstitute their basic frames of awareness, and that teachers ought to recognize the moral scope of what students take on when they engage the developmental motion that education requires. "Since each step in the development presents a challenge to a person's previous assumptions and requires that he redefine and extend his responsibilities, his growth does indeed involve his courage. In short . . . development resembles what used to be called an adventure of the spirit" (p. 44).

The challenges and risks associated with development are likely even more pressing when the educational environment is new and unfamiliar. For students in our research study, who are encountering not only new norms for understanding but a fully novel learning environment, the courage required to transform familiar assumptions and to engage willingly in the reordering of their worldviews is profound. The shifts in identity they undergo are heightened and serve to raise our awareness of how self-concept and epistemological structure are connected.

Premise 5: Because change is desirable but readily resisted, developmental educators have to facilitate change through the provision of appropriate challenges to students' current understandings. To offset the potentially damaging impact of extreme challenge, developmental educators must also structure useful and timely supports to students who are being asked to stretch their current conceptual frameworks.

The responsibility for students' progress through educational institutions and forward on their own developmental paths cannot rest only with their personal courage. The provision of a culture that supports students' advances toward their own intentions as well as those of the institutions is also the responsibility of their teachers and of the broader educational community in which they participate. Attention to the process of how learners make sense of their educational experience, an awareness of the different possible forms the experience can take on for learners at different developmental levels, and an assessment of curricular goals and methods from the point of view of the needs of the learner are all forms of support the institution can offer. Attention also to the students' experiences of how their self-understanding is impacted by the claims made on their minds by the educational process is an appropriate function of the institution. In each of these functions, the institution that holds the student as he moves through the process of taking on and letting go of ever new forms of knowing has to somehow simultaneously support and challenge this ongoing evolution. Kegan (1982) describes these functions as comprising "confirmation, contradiction, and continuity," (p. 258) suggesting that there are structures of "holding" that parallel the learners' own experiences of consolidating new ways of knowing.

This premise suggests that teachers and researchers who focus on the contexts in which adults undergo development are successful when they construct appropriate holding environments. In our own research, we are interested in how holding environments reach beyond the institutions' intentional designs to the social and personal spheres through which adult learners access both challenge and support to new ideas and new aims for themselves.

In exploring the perspective shifts we noticed among the participants in our study, we chose not to focus solely on their understandings of themselves as students. Since perspective shifts involve changes to the holistic frameworks that individuals bring to their understanding of all aspects of their lives, limiting our analysis to any one aspect would yield incomplete and perhaps skewed portraits. Instead, we looked for ways that these perspective shifts involved multiple and interacting transitions in several aspects of these participants' lives. We noticed how often participants returned to the topic of their ultimate dreams and goals. They spoke about the difficulties and joys they experienced in leaving their native countries and trying to make a place for themselves in a new country, a new culture, and among new people. They described the importance of their families and their changing relationships with family members. They related their concerns and hopes about choosing a major field of study and a career path. Many talked about the loss of friendships and the struggle to develop new ones, and some shared stories of the changing shape of their most intimate romantic relationships.

It is when we consider these stories of transition, together with their transitions into the role of community college student, that we are better able to bring into relationship with each other the several dimensions of students' lives. We have new insights about the ways these students face the world, the challenges they face, the priorities they set for themselves. As Kathleen Shaw (1999) argues,

> community college students are engaged in a juggling act of sorts with an array of identities. If these students are to successfully manage their various roles—that is, if they are to maintain their identity as students while they also function as parents, workers, and members of a particular racial or ethnic category—community colleges must recognize, embrace, and accommodate the complexity of these students' lives. (pp. 153-4)

Appreciating the many dimensions of students' lives can inform the ways that institutions structure holding environments which appropriately challenge and support their members.

SECTION III: TRANSITIONS RELATED TO AGE AND LIFE TASK

The main purpose of this section is to illustrate the nature of one type of transition happening in the lives of the participants in our study. This transition concerns the specific projects that individuals undertake as they leave their adolescence and enter into the adult world. We make sense of these projects from the ways that students describe their current experiences, desires, and hopes for their careers, their relationships with their families of origin, and their intimate relationships. Listening to these participants' stories, we see interesting relationships between their stories and those of other emerging adults who have been written about by life span theorists.

According to life span theorists, the physical, social, psychological, and emotional changes that individuals experience at given phases of their lives are interrelated and age-dependent, following a predictable and somewhat uniform course (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1964, 1968; Levinson, 1978, 1996; Scarf, 1980; Vaillant, 1977; Wigfield et al, 1996; Wortley & Amatea, 1982). These theorists generally identify the time of life which begins in the late teens and lasts through the mid- to late-20s as a period of entrance into adulthood (Arnett, 2000; Levinson, 1978, 1996; Scarf, 1980; Vaillant, 1977; Wigfield et al, 1996; Wortley & Amatea, 1982). They describe similarities in the types of changes occurring in individuals' lives—in their decisions and plans for their careers, families of origin, and intimate relationships. Our 17 original participants are largely within this same age range. Thirteen are between the ages of 18 and 23. Two are slightly older, at 26 and 27. And two are significantly older at 37 and 38. The vast majority of the students in our study therefore fall within the same developmental era, the late teens through the 20s, and we see similarities between their descriptions of the changes in their lives and those predicted by the literature.

However, we have also noticed that there are important differences, both among the various paths fashioned by the participants in our study and between their paths and those depicted in the life-span literature. By attending specifically to issues of culture, gender, and life experience, we are able to provide explanations for many of these differences. We are therefore able to draw a more complex picture of the ways that the participants in our study make sense of the transitions in their lives. Additionally, we bring a developmental perspective to these transitions. Examining not only what the participants in our study describe, but how they understand these aspects of their lives highlights other important similarities and differences in their perspectives. Individuals operating with different ways of understanding bring qualitatively different frames to their approach to the transitions in their lives.

The learners in our study also have many similarities in terms of their developmental capacities. Our research measures suggest that all learners share some features of the Socializing way of understanding (Level 3). In fact, for most of the participants in our study, this way of understanding is dominant. Therefore, it is difficult to draw clean distinctions about the differences among the way these students discuss themselves as students and their preferences for processes or approaches to learning. Instead, they seem to represent various points along a continuum, sharing some fundamental features, but also exhibiting subtle but important differences. For students at one end of the continuum, their Socializing ways of understanding are shaded with more Instrumental concerns (Level 2). For students at the other end, there are glimpses of Self-Authorship (Level 4). In order to distinguish between the ways that differences in developmental capacity underlie differences in individual stories, we have chosen excerpts from our interviews that highlight the developmental differences among the learners. We recognize and remind our readers that in highlighting these distinctions, we downplay similarities, complexities, and subtle nuances in students' meaning-making systems.

Finally, this section serves another important purpose. In describing the major themes in these individuals' lives, we are able to introduce the participants in our study through their own words and stories. Focusing on their age-related transitions, we are also able to see marked distinctions between the preoccupations these BHCC participants bring to the learning endeavor and those at the other two sites discussed in this monograph.

Forming a Dream

According to some life-span theorists (Levinson, 1978, 1996; Scarf, 1980), an important task individuals face as they enter adulthood is to begin forming a "Dream" for their lives. The Dream concerns one's goals and visions for the future.

> In its primordial form, a Dream is a vague sense of self-in-world, an imagined possibility of one's adult life that generates excitement and vitality. Though its origins are in childhood, it is a distinctively adult phenomenon: it takes clearer shape and is gradually integrated within (or, often, excluded from) the adult life structure over the course of early adulthood. (Levinson, 1996, p. 238)

In its earliest forms, a Dream may not be fully defined and may not yet involve specific and detailed plans for the future. However, it does provide an initial sense of direction and purpose that can be nurtured and advanced in later years.

Many participants in our study speak explicitly about the importance of forming a Dream for the future, and by the time of our first interviews with them, most had already begun the process of setting goals and envisioning the path their lives will take. Many make explicit links between their ages and their ability to form and pursue these dreams. Armand remembers telling his father that he didn't want to begin college until he had a sense of his larger purposes.

> Because, if I just come in and I start to go to school without knowing what is goal ahead, that's a waste of time. Because if you are going to do something you don't like, or probably you'll just do because you just want to do something, and that is a waste of time. You have to know the goal, why you go to school? That's why I'm not surprised to see some people who are older than college age, still coming to

> school. That is good, because they know what they are looking for. There is a goal for it.[6]

As his words suggest, younger individuals may be less likely to have identified goals for their lives, while those students who are older are more likely to know these goals, to consider their college experiences in light of their larger life purposes.

A student in his mid-20s, Serge agrees that the process of forming plans and goals is important at his stage in life. However, he warns that these decisions should not be put off for too long; otherwise, individuals will be "miserable" later.

> We have to plan how you want your life to be. I want to have a house, you know. A nice car. A nice family. But you gotta plan so that those things can go the way that you want it. You have to organize your life. Because if you don't, you will find yourself a little bit miserable, because you didn't organize your life. You know, when you are in puberty, like, 15 to 17 years old, you don't think, really, about organized life. You think, like, having girlfriends and that's all. You know, but when you are 19 or 20 years old, you going to college, and then you see that you can't do the same in life anymore. You have to change something. You need to organize things, and to plan the way you want things to be. You think about what you want to be in life, and how you can be successful, or how can you be useful for the society. And then you start by making plans for that.

Marie, who is in her early 20s, also feels that she is at a crucial point in her life for making decisions and preparing for her future. Like Serge, she believes that pursuing these goals cannot be postponed for too long, since her age currently affords her "opportunities" that she may not have later in life.

> I want to go further in my career. I want to study physical therapy, and I want be a physical therapist. And I think that my education is really important for me right now, especially at this age. I just turned [a year older]. Because when you are really young, this is when you got the opportunity to continue. When you wait for a certain age, it will be too late. When you have the opportunity to go further, it's when you take the opportunity. That's what I think my education is really important to me right now.

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[6] In this chapter, quotes have been altered to omit interviewer contributions, conversational spacers, and false starts. In places, participants' comments have been reorganized and/or language has been changed slightly to more standardized forms. We have made these changes to prevent readers from being distracted from or confused about the participants' main points.

Despite the slight variation in their ages, all three students see age as an important determinant of when individuals are ready to make important decisions about their goals for the future.

Two important components of the Dream include plans for career and family. These themes are also prominently featured in the life-span literature and are the subjects of important transitions that individuals must make as they move into adulthood. Predictions in the life-span literature about individuals' steps toward careers parallel the transitions the participants in our study describe in their own lives. However, predictions about individuals' increasing focus on intimate relationships, and their growth away from their families of origin, differ significantly from the experiences of the participants in our study.

Career Transitions

A clear transition the participants in our study describe is their process of choosing a career (see Table 3), a transition which is also predicted in the life-span literature. Daniel Levinson (1978, 1996) argues that the formation of serious career goals is a major task for males and career-oriented women who are in their twenties, often prompted by the need to choose a major field of study. For most participants in our study, choosing a major and career is very important to them and is often a subject they return to in their interviews.

Table 3: Career Transitions

Name	Career Transition
Yousef	Wants to continue education to get a better job with a good salary in order to buy a house and support his family. Has chosen computer information for his major. But may change it because the classes are difficult, he doesn't have a computer at home to complete his assignments, and it requires four years of study. Is considering X-ray technician because the coursework is easier, the degree takes only two years, but he can still make a good salary.
Xuan	Wants to be an administrative assistant and be paid well enough to support herself.
Minh	Wants to transfer to a four-year college because it will enable her to get a better job with a good salary. Wants to major in computer information systems. Plans to marry her boyfriend and open a small computer business in New York. A good income will allow her to support her family, so that her children can get a good education and won't have to worry about money like she does. Wants to own a beautiful house.
Gilles	Wants to transfer to a four-year college. In first semester, is deciding whether to be a pharmacist or a journalist. In second semester, wants to be a pharmacist and major in biology. Wants to earn enough money to take care of family and himself.
Abdel	Chooses to major in management because it provides many different career possibilities. Will choose specific career later.
Ling-Hui	Wants to transfer to a four-year university and then go to graduate school. Plans to major in computer science.
Jonas	Wants an education to be prepared for the future. Mentions he may major in accounting, but he isn't sure. Wants to be a good example for his brothers, sisters, and future children—to help them get good jobs, be happy, and treat people well. Wants to provide his future children with a good education.
Armand	In the first semester, he says he is thinking about a career and major in travel management because he enjoys thinking about how to help customers. In the second semester, he describes plans to transfer to a four-year college and is considering a major in international business.
Tak-Jang	Wants to transfer to a four-year university. During the first semester, he was trying to decide between pharmacy and computer studies. Both are subjects he is interested in, but he has more interest in biology than in computers, and pharmacy doesn't take as many years to learn. By the end of the first semester, he has decided on pharmacy. His goals are to have a profession, make some money, and make his family happy. If he makes enough money, he wants to open his own restaurant.
Natalia	Wants to major in biology. In first semester, is unclear about profession and says she is considering many things. In second semester, she has decided she wants to transfer to a four-year university and do medical research for her profession.
Fawzia	In first semester, can't decide between nursing and computer science. Likes computer science but also likes nursing because it is "connected to life" and because others have advised her that it is a good choice and that she can get a nursing job easily. In second semester, she decides on nursing and plans to major in medical administration, transfer to a four-year university, and then switch her major to nursing. Wants to make a lot of money and help support her family.

(Table 3 Continued)

Name	Career Transition
Benetta	Wants to be a nurse because she likes to help people, especially elderly people who cannot do many things by themselves. Wants to be a professional so that she can take care of her husband, mother, and future children. Wants to have her own house and for her children to get a good education. Wants to provide her family with a better life.
Gabriela	Wants to transfer to a four-year university. Originally wanted to be a biology teacher, but after living in the U.S., she has become more interested in being a social worker, to counsel teenagers (especially Latino teenagers), to be a model for them and someone they can talk to. She wants a job that pays well so she can be independent and support herself if necessary.
Marie	Wants to transfer to a four-year college and become a physical therapist. Wants to work for herself because she doesn't like to have bosses who tell her what to do. A good job and an education will mean that other people will respect her. Wants her future children to be proud of her.
Sonja	Has always wanted to work in radio broadcasting, but didn't have the opportunity to study this subject until she came to the U.S. Wants to prove herself to others and play the music she likes.
Serge	Trying to decide between being a physical therapist and pharmacist. Wants to be a pharmacist because he feels he can do well and likes math and science. Wants to have a nice family, house, and a car.
Fei-Wen	Has not yet decided on a career or major. In the first semester, she is interested in nursing. In the second semester, she considers psychology. She is very interested in psychology but thinks it would be hard to find a job, and she wants to graduate as soon as possible and get a better job.

In his study of "emerging adulthood," the ages between 18 and 25, Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (2000) argues that college students typically change majors more than once as they experiment with different possible occupational futures. He views these experiments as guided both by the need to prepare for adult roles, and by the need to partake in "explorations for their own sake" (p. 474). In this period in individuals' lives, engaging in exploration is "part of obtaining a broad range of life experiences before taking on enduring—and limiting—adult responsibilities" (p. 474). There are two students in our study who seem to have this type of attitude about their choice of a major. Abdel, a student in his mid-20s, seems content to focus on college, choosing a general major which will enable him to make career decisions later.

> Well, actually, I'm major in management. I have a lot of things to do with management. But I give myself more time. I don't want to think about what I will do after college. I'm focusing now on college first. Maybe I get another opportunity for other things that I have in mind. So, I will leave that when the time comes up.

And when we first interviewed her, Fei-Wen also seemed interested in keeping her options open.

> Sometimes my friends and family think I would better have a job than go to school. Don't spend so much money, and don't spend time because they want me to get a job. Then I can earn a lot of money. Because, you know, I have to spend a lot, and if I want to continue to study I will spend a lot to come and study. They want to know the result, what is your learning result? So, if you can learn something faster, that's okay. If you will spend so many times, maybe then it's useless. I don't know, but I'm interested in learning so I want to learn.

However, by the end of the semester Fei-Wen describes herself as feeling much more pressure to choose a major, complete her degree, and find a "better job."

> Sometimes I think if psychology is my own language I will learn it as my major. But it's not, you know, if I learn psychology, I think maybe I looking for a job is difficult. When I've got a better job maybe I came back to school to learn more psychology to help me. But now I don't choose it. Because I want to finish. I want to get a diploma as soon as possible. If I spend a lot of time learn psychology, I will delay my other course.

Compared to the other participants in our study, Abdel seems to be the exception rather than the rule. While many participants change their minds about their majors over the course of our study, there is little indication that their exploration of possible majors involves much exploration "for its own sake." And most, unlike Abdel, often speak in great detail, with a sense of urgency, about the ways they are thinking about their decision. These students consider the ways that their choice of major will prepare them for various adult roles and responsibilities. They mention factors such as salary, their own long-term interests and abilities, the number of available jobs in a given field, the amount of preparation required for certain jobs, and the impact of particular jobs on their ability to provide for their family and home country.

At the beginning of the program, Gilles is deciding between being a journalist or a pharmacist. Both options have interest for him, although he is also aware of some disadvantages to journalism. In weighing these two possibilities, Gilles orients to the ways that these jobs will impact his ability to take care of and protect himself and his future family. He is also interested in developing skills that will enable him to help the people in his own country.

> When I get my diploma, I would like to start a family and get a good job. I want to be able to take care of my family and myself. I don't know yet what kind of job I want, but I like studying chemistry, and I am thinking about being a pharmacist. I would like to study about chemical reactions and medicines, yeah. But sometime I think I would like to study journalism and be a reporter. I would like that. But in my country, some reporters don't have enough safety, and they can die. That's why I'm not sure about it. I have to think about protecting my family.
>
> I like journalism because I would like to tell things to people in my country. They will love the journalists who can talk with them and make them feel comfortable. I want to tell people about the true things that happen, and talk to them in a way to make them feel comfortable. When I talking to them, they listen to me, and they will be happy. And you can, you can get more friends as a journalist and more intelligence with your practical talk.

By the end of the program, he has committed to majoring in biology and pursuing a career in pharmacy. In talking with his friends, Gilles realizes that becoming a pharmacist might also be a way to help people. "[It's important to me] to help people in my country. My family, my friends, too." He appears to have no interest in postponing consideration of these future plans in favor of accumulating a broader range of experience. As he makes these decisions, therefore, Gilles focuses solely on the future responsibilities he hopes to fulfill.

Tak-Jang is also trying to make a decision about his career goals and is interested in both pharmacy and computer science. Like Gilles, Tak-Jang deliberates on the implications of this decision on his future goals and shows no interest in deferring his decision until a later time.

> I have a goal. I want to reach it. My goal is to have some profession and then make my family, you can say, happy.
>
> I'm not sure which course I should take in next semester. I have interest biology and computer. Next semester I need choose one of them. I know some about computers because I have learned some basic concepts of it. But maybe I will choose to be a pharmacist because now I'm studying Psychology, about the functions of the brain and human body. So, I also have some basic concepts. Maybe I can take a major or minor, but my English may not be that good enough to do it, to deal with them. So, I must just take one of those. I can't pick it now.
>
> If I learn computer, I must be taking a long time. The computer is so complicated, and so many things for me to learn. Maybe six years, seven years. But pharmacy is

> not that long I think. So maybe pharmacist is the first choice because now I'm not too young. So, that time is also important to me.

At the end of the first semester, he says he has chosen pharmacy.

> So, I'm going to study pharmacy, I think, after two more semesters. I just start to decide that. Now I make my mind to choice the pharmacist because I'm more interested in learning biology thing. That's why I want to pick that. Also, my sister and my parents say pharmacists can make more money.

Tak-Jang does not, in fact, feel that he has the luxury of time in choosing a major. He sees this decision as having important implications for the courses he takes each semester, as well as for the number of years he will need to study. In his mid-20s, Tak-Jang feels increasing pressure to attain his career goals of earning sufficient money and being a professional.

While both Tak-Jang and Gilles struggle to decide which path to follow, some participants seem to have an easier time making a choice about their majors and their future careers. Minh seems much more certain of her decision to study computer science, even though she has also made that decision very recently.

> In [my native country] I study economics. But here I change my mind. Now my major is computer information systems. It's very difficult to study economics here because communications is very important in economics, and I only have a short time to study. So, I change my mind to computer, and I like computer too.

For Sonja, having the opportunity to prepare for a career in broadcasting enables her to fulfill a dream she has had since childhood.

> I really like music, and I really like radio. That was like my dream since forever. And I didn't have that opportunity in my country. And when I came here, I suddenly got an opportunity, and I wouldn't miss it for anything, so now I want to be a radio broadcaster. I don't know why that career is so exciting to me. I mean, I can spend hours and hours in my room, listening to music. And can you imagine how will I feel if I do that in some place and actually earn money for that. And then, I don't know, I feel free. I feel like that's freedom.
>
> In the past, I lived by a radio station. My friend, he worked there. And I was just there to see. Basically, I didn't do anything. I was just sitting there and watching what he was doing, and it was a local radio station, nothing big, nothing huge. But, I don't know, I talked about it months after that. I was talking still about it. But even before I went there, I knew that, that like radio was something I really like.

Neither Minh nor Sonja shows interest in exploring other possibilities. In fact, Minh's concerns, that she has only "a short time to study," indicate that delaying her decision might cause her to feel increased anxiety.

There are several contextual factors which might contribute to the seriousness and sense of urgency the participants in our study express. Arnett (2000) argues that even in highly industrialized countries, some individuals may not experience a sense of freedom about how they make educational and occupational decisions. Minority and working-class individuals are likely to experience limitations on the available opportunities for exploration, and they may therefore feel a greater sense of pressure to take on adult roles. These conditions certainly apply to the participants in our study, who often face significant social and financial pressures in their daily lives.

Additionally, students may experience the culture and circumstances of the institution itself as a source of pressure. As students of a community college, their career choice determines whether they will need a two-year degree or whether they will need to transfer to a four-year institution. For students considering transfer, their chosen field, the courses they select, and their academic performance take on increased significance. They have little time or opportunity to risk on experimentation or careless decisions. Ling-Hui seems to experience the greatest amount of pressure in preparing to transfer.

> After I graduate here I have to transfer [to a four-year institution.] I don't know they will accept me on that. So if I have to worry about this.

She is unique among the participants in our study in that she plans to transfer twice. Before applying to a four-year university, she will first transfer to another two-year institution that she thinks has a better record of preparing students for transfer to four-year universities.

> I think if we finish two years here already, it's only 60% to transfer [to a four-year university] so I want to—if I can transfer as soon as possible, so that's why I just study for first semester and then I transfer.

While Ling-Hui may therefore experience even greater pressure to make good decisions about her coursework and choice of major, the majority of the participants in our study also consider transferring, either before or upon completion of their Associate's degree.

Another influence that the institution may have for the participants in our study is that the selection of majors at BHCC reflects a strong emphasis on job training and preparation. While students may choose to major in English or biology, majors which could lead to several different career choices, other majors such as travel and computer information systems are directly linked to careers. There may not be other considerations beyond future occupation that are suggested to students. According to our data, none of the participants in our study report speaking to an advisor, teacher, or career counselor to help them choose their major and future career. They are therefore reliant on their own judgment, although many also report seeking the advice of friends and/or family.

How Participants Choose Their Majors and Future Careers

The life-span literature is a helpful lens in highlighting the importance of the transitions toward career and work in the participants' experiences. It helps us describe the *content* of their concerns about their choice of a major and future career. It also helps highlight some of the contextual factors that might influence students' decisions. However, it does not provide us much help in understanding *the structure* of the participants' thinking, the fundamental ways that they frame their experiences of themselves, their relationships, and their goals. It cannot account for the different capacities students demonstrate as they make these decisions. Looking at students' reasoning through a constructive-developmental lens, differences among the learners' orientations to these decisions become clear.

Growing from Instrumental Ways of Understanding

Many of the learners in our study place great emphasis on the practical implications of their career choice. Nine specifically mention the importance of choosing a career that will provide them with a good salary. Some think about the availability of jobs within a given field. Participants also consider the steps they must follow to complete their major and become qualified for the type of work they seek, comparing the amount of education and training involved and the relative difficulty of the coursework. A few mention worries about choosing careers which require expertise in English. These are all important considerations, and given the significant pressures and obstacles the participants in our study face as they chart their own futures, they are wise to deliberate about them.

However, some participants *only* weigh these factors and in doing so, they limit their reasoning to the concrete aspects of the decision. For students operating primarily with an Instrumental way of understanding, goals are based on concrete needs and desires and are achieved by following prescribed concrete steps and rules. Such students may also rely heavily on the concrete advice and experiences of others, often accepting this information without question as necessary steps to achieve their goals.

Although Yousef has begun to develop Socializing ways of understanding, he still relies primarily on Instrumental ways of understanding to make his career decisions. Trying to decide between becoming an X-ray technician or a computer scientist, Yousef talks about the importance of such practical concerns as money, easier coursework, and job benefits. Depending on the experiences of his friends to help him decide, Yousef has great difficulty determining which friend's advice he should follow.

> I decided to take computer information because I have my friend also he took the computer information. He's working now. He tell me take computer information. You can work and you can transfer to another university to finish four years. He tell me you can work and you can study also. Now he's going the evening to [a four-year university]. He want to finish four years. Yeah, I do same. He's doing good. He get good job, he has good office and good team there, they are all together. He has benefits, he has vacation, he has one month every year, vacation. But I have other friends who are X-ray technicians, and they are happy too. I saw them. They own house; they stay here; they eat good. They didn't work hard. Sometime they work overtime. They call them every time. You can make good money from overtime. Yeah, but now I'm thinking about computer information. Because I decide to buy computer. Next week, I will buy one computer. I don't know.
>
> It would be easy for me to take X-ray technician. I think this one is better because easier for me to take this one. It's only two years. But computer you have to finish four years if you want to get good job, good salary, pay. But what the most thing important to me is computer information because you can get good job, good money.

Yousef mentions concrete aspects of a job that help him determine if it is "a good job" or not. He considers a job's potential in providing employee benefits, vacation time, and salary. These features will enable him to meet his concrete needs and desires, to eat well and own a house. He also considers steps he must take to prepare for a job, the amount of time and relative ease of the preparatory coursework. While he does include the advice and experience of his friends as he deliberates, he does so only in terms of what he thinks their advice will get him. He does not actually try to imagine how these friends understand their work and feel about it. Neither does he consider the potential ways that his decision to accept or reject their advice might impact these friends' opinions of him. These considerations would demonstrate greater growth toward a Socializing way of understanding his career and friendships. He looks to advice from his friends for information that might potentially affect his purposes; from his words, there is no indication that he considers their advice as potentially forming or changing the purposes themselves.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

While students operating out of a Socializing way of understanding may also consider concrete and practical aspects of their decisions, they possess the ability to reflect on themselves in more abstract terms. In forming their goals, they may orient more toward their inner lives and subjective states, emphasizing concerns about their character and interests. They may identify and evaluate multiple paths toward any given goal. While they also seek out the opinions of others, these individuals are able to focus not only on the specific advice, but they internalize the perspective of important others in their lives. They may act in accordance with another's wishes out of a sense of loyalty or obligation, as a means of preserving an important relationship. Earlier in this section, we presented Tak-Jang's thoughts about how he might choose between pharmacy and computer science. However, as Tak-Jang continued to describe his decision, he mentioned that he has long had the goal of opening his own restaurant. This goal, however, is not one that his parents share for him. In selecting a major and career, Tak-Jang places great emphasis on the wishes and expectations of his parents.

> When I was in Hong Kong I always went to a certain restaurant to talk with the boss. At that time I start to build up that imagination. I want to be a restaurant owner. This thing is since I was 16 years old. I think it's about that age. My parents want me to have a good profession, and then in the future have a good life. The good life means I will have enough money. They have some expectations. My father wants me to become a computer technician, but I also want to open a restaurant. Both thing I want. It's hard to say about the future. Sometimes it depends on the destiny, right? Sometimes it isn't you hands, your mind, how to make yourself rich. Maybe in future, after eight years of working, I can have enough money to open restaurant. But my parents just want me to study some profession, but that's all. And they give me some direction, "You can working, save some money to open your business." I just want to do something for them. They gave me the expectation. The very best is if I can do all the things I want and they want.

Tak-Jang demonstrates his ability to consider other people's opinions not just in terms of how they *inform* his own purposes but for how they can *form* the purposes themselves. While his goal of owning a restaurant could be seen as being in conflict with his father's goal for him to become a computer technician, Tak-Jang emphasizes the agreement and commonality between his father's wishes and his own. He tells us he wants *both* things, and that *he wants* to do what *they want*. In this sense, he orients to the ways that they can have a mutual understanding of the best decision he can make. In demonstrating this Socializing way of understanding, Tak-Jang is not unlike an American college student who chooses to attend the college of his parents' dreams, or who focuses on his peers' approval in order to determine his own behavior.

Growing Toward Self-Authoring Ways of Understanding

As students evolve out of these Socializing ways of understanding, they develop their own standards and values, and are able to act on them, mindful of, but more independent of what others think or expect. They may still consider the advice of others, but they do not accept responsibility for the feelings of others about their decisions. Thus, should important others disagree with their decisions, these students do not necessarily perceive these conflicts as threatening to their relationships. Rather, the relationship itself supports and gives permission for more independent and autonomous thinking. They can come to their own conclusions based on their internal standards and values. In the end, decisions are their own.

Sonja, who is evolving out of a Socializing way of understanding and into a Self-Authoring way of understanding, has not received much encouragement from others in pursuing a career in radio broadcasting. Many assume that she will find no opportunities for work, or that she will have to return to her native country since she will always have an accent.

> Then again, in my country, people are like, "Oh, come on. You're crazy. You don't have a chance for that. You know that." No one really takes me seriously about that. Even me. I was like, "Yeah, I like to do radio, and that would be great. But come on. Get a life. Do something else." Here, people react at school okay. The only problem I have is English. I'm aware that I don't speak English. Even after five, six years, I will always have this accent. Everybody's like, "So, do you plan to go back to your country when you finish here?" I mean, honestly, I really don't care where I'm going to work. My country or here. I just think that's the work what I want. I don't know much about radio. I know that I like that, and I don't know what kind of work I can do.

While Sonja seems to recognize that her accent might pose problems for her, she does not automatically accept others' beliefs that she must return to her native country to find work. Instead, she makes clear that she will be the one to decide where she will work, and that she does not yet have the information she needs to make that decision.

> So hopefully when I start to go to school, and when I learn more about it, then I like decide what am I actually want to do. And when I decide then I'll probably know do I want to work here, or do I want to work in my country.

In this instance, she demonstrates a Self-Authoring way of understanding. She is able to tolerate the conflict between her own hopes and others' beliefs about her hopes, and she does not express the need to minimize this conflict. Her Self-Authoring capabilities enable her to hold onto and consider these conflicting views, waiting until she can integrate them with the necessary information, support, and experience to make her own career decisions.

Using the life-span literature in conjunction with a developmental perspective therefore enables us to deepen our understanding of the ways participants make decisions about their major field and future career. We can see that common features such as students' ages and context combine to exert pressures on them to make choices about the direction their educational paths will take, and we can also attend to important differences in the ways the students make these decisions. These differences in developmental capacity contribute powerfully to the ways that students will make sense of the demands they face and have implications for the types of supports they need to help them successfully meet their goals. We will return to these larger issues later in this chapter. First, we describe another type of age-related transition predicted in the life-span literature, the changing relationship of young adults to their families of origin.

Family Transitions

Many of the participants in our study describe transitions they are making in their roles as family members (see Table 4). According to many life-span theorists, individuals moving from adolescence into young adulthood should be making significant progress toward achieving greater independence and separation from their families of origin (Erikson, 1964, 1968; Levinson, 1978, 1996; Scarf, 1980; Vaillant, 1977; Wortley & Amatea, 1982). Some theorists argue that adolescents need to differentiate their selves and their beliefs from their parents in order to form their own identity (Erikson, 1964, 1968; Vaillant, 1977). In Levinson's studies (1977, 1996), both men and women in their late teens and early 20s were separating psychologically from their parents. For the women, this process of separation continued into their later twenties as well.

Table 4: Family Transitions

Name	Family Transition
Yousef	Has close relationship to his parents, uncle, and sister. Decided not to marry the girlfriend he loves in order to marry the girl his father chose for him. Made that decision because his father was sick, he was afraid that the two families would fight, is following his religious and cultural beliefs. But, he still loves his first girlfriend and has continued to write letters to her. Considers bringing her to the U.S. Feels lonely in the U.S. without his family.
Xuan	Lives with her mother and father but is interested in moving out to be on her own. Says that she does not tell her parents much about her academic coursework.
Minh	Wanted to stay in her native country where she could have graduated and gotten a good job and where she had many friends. But, because she is the oldest child in her family, she needed to come here with her parents. She made that decision because she loves her parents, and they need her help. She says that in her native country, children cannot make decisions without their parents. She hopes that she will be able to help her parents financially, since they have always worked hard to provide for her.
Gilles	Both parents are deceased. Sometimes he feels angry about that and misses them.
Abdel	Talks only a little about his family, but he says they are proud of him and that they are a source of support, motivation, and encouragement for him.
Ling-Hui	Parents live in her native country. She was living and studying in Australia and wanted to stay there, but her family decided she should come to the U.S. and live her with aunt. Feels there is more pressure on her in the U.S. Sometimes she can make her own decisions, but her family knows better about many things, and so often she follows their advice.
Jonas	Only member of his immediate family living in the U.S. His mother is extremely important to him. She worries about him a lot and wants him to go to school in his native country. She worked very hard and paid for his schooling and tells him what to do. Father was killed by guerrillas when he was six or seven years old. Does not have a good relationship with his brothers and sisters, who have treated him badly. Decided to leave the program before the end of the first semester and return to his native country because his mother became ill.
Armand	His sister has lived in the U.S. for many years has been able to help him adjust to being in this country. Describes his parents as having always been very open to many different kinds of people. Mother is deceased. Father is supportive and encouraging of Armand's decision to work toward his diploma.
Tak-Jang	Wanted to stay in his native country because he felt he was too old to go back to school and work so hard. However, he came because his parents cut relations with his other brother, and Tak-Jang now represents their hopes and expectations. These hopes and expectations are common for parents from his native country to have, but he thinks Americans believe these ideas are foolish. He wants his family to be happy.
Natalia	Parents want to spend a lot of time with her, to take care of her and keep her close to them. Doesn't want them to be hurt or angry and worries about them if she is out. Is very close to her brother. The idea of being without her family makes her feel confused, alone, cold, and dark.

(Table 4 Continued)

Name	Family Transition
Fawzia	Parents live in her native country. Father is a physician. When Fawzia was young, he often taught her about science and medicine and let her visit and sometimes work at his hospital. Fawzia tries not to tell her parents anything that will make them worry about her.
Benetta	Is married and lives with her husband. Has a very close relationship to her mother, who she says is her best friend. Mother wants her to go back to her native country and study there, but Benetta disagrees. Has good relationship with her brother and stepfather.
Gabriela	Immediate family, including parents and two brothers, live in the U.S. One brother studies at a university in Boston and gives her advice about how to help finance her education. Also gets a lot of encouragement from friends and family in her native country.
Marie	Has five brothers and sisters, including Serge. Didn't want to go back to school, but parents told her that if she didn't, she had to live on her own. She feels that this was good pressure; it encouraged her. Without their financial support, she wouldn't be able to be in school. Parents don't want her to have a boyfriend until she finishes school. She talks to them to explain what she wants, that she can make her own decisions.
Sonja	Has no secrets from her mother and talks to her about important decisions. Her mother tells her what she thinks but allows Sonja to decide for herself. Tells her mother about her life because she wants her mother to trust her.
Serge	Talks to his family about the decisions he makes. It is part of his culture and religion to respect, honor, and listen to his parents. When parents give their children advice, it shows that they love their children and want to help them. Doesn't want to be by himself where his family aren't around him to support him and help him succeed. Now parents come to him to talk about their decisions, give him more responsibility. Helps to teach his brothers and sisters.
Fei-Wen	Parents would prefer that she work rather than study and are very focused on the impact of her studying on her future occupation. Her husband would also prefer that she be earning money. However, his main concern is that she be happy. She describes him as "a little boy" who doesn't understand "what is American life." They cannot communicate much because they are so far away from each other.

Some of the participants in our study do have or want more separation from their families of origin. Six of 17 participants live separately from their parents, a fact which may necessitate greater psychological separation. Other participants seek greater autonomy from one or more of their parents, a change which may signal successful development, but for many also presents them with serious emotional and psychological consequences. In his research on women's life transitions Levinson (1996) describes how when parent-child relationships fail to transform, the relationship itself becomes stressful and is at risk for dissolution.

> The daughter's developmental task in the Early Adult Transition is to transform the relationship to the family of origin from the childhood pattern to one that is more adult, not cut it off altogether. It is important to diminish certain aspects of the existing relationship; for example, those in which she is the excessively submissive

> or defiant child in relation to all-controlling parents. It is important also to sustain other aspects and to build in new qualities such as mutual respect between individuals who have separate (though still partially intertwined) lives . . . If the relationships cannot be modified in a way appropriate to the developmental needs of both offspring and parents, they will become increasingly stressful and may in time wither away—a much more widespread phenomenon than is usually recognized. (p. 71)

However, if young adults fail to differentiate from their parents, such failure may lead to an inability to attain the tasks of adulthood—achieving intimacy and committing to a career (Vaillant, 1977).

Making these complicated transitions can be difficult under any circumstances, but the path becomes even more precarious when family life is characterized by abuse, alcoholism, fragmentation, or dysfunction. Levinson (1996) suggests that such conditions are "inimical" (p. 61) to individuals' development, but he does not argue that these individuals should or do follow developmental paths that are significantly different from those of individuals facing fewer "environmental stresses or constraints" (p. 61). A few participants in our study describe experiences of significant stress and turmoil in their families. All three seek greater separation from members of their family, although these separations do not complete their tasks in the manner recommended by life-span theorists. We do not believe that their responses to their family situations are therefore unhealthy or developmentally inappropriate. Instead, we suggest that the path described in the existing literature may be too narrow and prescriptive to account for the range of situations that individuals experience. Further studies of young adults navigating these transitions could contribute to a broader, more complex and inclusive theory of life-span development. Here, we offer three students' stories in order to raise questions for future research to address.

One young woman participant,[7] who is in her late teens, wants to achieve a greater separation from her father and describes her increasing independence as a threat to their relationship. She is eager to move out because she doesn't agree with her father's strict rules for her and wants to escape his physical punishments when she disobeys him.

> My family is important to me. Family is once-in-a-lifetime. You only have one mom or one dad. I love my mom more than my dad 'cause my dad is too strict. He

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[7] We purposefully refrain from using this student's pseudonym, to mask any risk of revealing her identity. We include the story because it illustrates an important, and common, challenge young adults face, and demonstrates how her meaning-system impacts her capacity to direct desirable changes in her life.

> doesn't let me go out and doesn't let me have boyfriends. But I have them anyway. And I like my mom better, 'cause, you know, she let me do anything I want. She doesn't even get in my way, lets me have boyfriends, lets me go out if my father doesn't. As long as I don't do anything wrong such as smoking, drinking, that stuff. She tells me those things are bad. My dad has stricter rules. Last time I got caught having boyfriend, he hit me. That's why I hate him. Having a boyfriend's no big deal. Why does he have to hit me? That happened when I was in tenth grade. It's just that my parents have old fashioned way, or my dad's old fashioned.
>
> I want to move out if I can support myself here. I'd miss my mom because I like her more than my father. You know, she's nice. She's not strict. She cares for me, asks me what do I want to eat. She never yell at me. She never lay a hand on me. I would want to stay in the house, if my dad go somewhere else. Because he has hit me more than once. I skipped school, he hit me. I didn't stop worrying that he might do it again. I want to go to school, achieve my goal and then later on move out. Go to work. You know, if you go to school and get you major, you can support yourself. Get good job. You don't need to worry about anything.

This participant's rejection of her father's beliefs about how she should live her life may indicate she is making progress toward attaining her own identity and independence. She may reject her father's commands as a means of asserting her refusal to be completely determined by him. However, her ability to form her own identity and achieve independence may also be at risk here if the physical threats her father poses to her actually push her toward a self-reliance she is not yet ready to assume. Without more information, it is difficult to determine how much her desire for increased separation from her father could be a healthy part of her development or result primarily from a need to escape unsafe conditions at home.

A second young woman participant has also struggled against her father's attempts to control her. Her decision to leave her native country and come to the U.S. involved a difficult separation from her father's wishes and expectations for her. However; this participant's decision also required her to assess her feelings of responsibility for her mother. While coming to the U.S. involves physical separation from her mother, she accepts responsibility for providing financial support to her mother. Taking on new and adult responsibilities for parents is not a task that the life-span literature describes as part of young adults' changing relationships toward their families.

I always worried about my mother. Because I am her only child. My parents are separate now. They divorce. So, my father, he marry another woman. And my mother, she live alone. Sometimes I went to my father house and sometimes I went to my mother house. And they don't have peace. They fighting, you know. And in my country, there is not jobs, you know. Because ladies, they don't work in my country. Most often they don't work. So, my mother, she is not working. Just she waiting for me, you know. I work. I study. And then I send money for her. And she doesn't have anything, you know, anybody to help her. And now also, with my country is fighting with [another country]. So everything is expensive, you know. Even the light is expensive. Even the food. Everything is expensive. So, I can help her. If I send her money every three months or six months, she can live okay.

I made the decision to leave [my native country] and come to the U.S. myself. Because I got visa lottery. And I filled out. When I filled it, I sent it to here. And my father, he told me not to come here. He was thinking like that. And he say, "You're not going to America." But, you know, I was thinking about my mother. I love my mother. And he hide my visa because he don't want me to continue the process. And then I told him, "Please father, I want to go." I told him and he say, "No. You're not going. If you go to America, you help your mother. I don't want you to help you mother." And he hid the visa. He told me, "I'm gonna tear it." I told him, "Please!" Yeah. I was crying. I was so angry! I was crying something! I told him, "Please! Please! Please!"

In two weeks the visa would expire. Finally when my father is going to work, I broke his locked drawer. And his wife wasn't home. I take out my visa. That's it. Then I went out from that house. I fill everything out. Then I send to America by express letter. He don't know. But when he came, he saw it's broken. He need to kill me! He need to kill me. But I told him, "Do you want to kill me? Now I am, like, 20 years old, so you don't need to kill me. I can do whatever I want." So, just I told him like that. And policeman told him, "Don't touch her! She can do whatever she wants. It's her decision. If she wants, she can go. You not decide about her life." They told him.

I send the visa express. In two months, it's coming back. It says, "Okay." Oh my God, I was so happy! I just got the interview everything. But I was crying! But if I don't success, oh my goodness! I'm going be dead! Just I was thinking like that!

But my decision is, when I graduate, I need to bring my mother here. Because my father doesn't do well for my mother. My mother told me the history of my father. He is so bad! Because when I live with him, he doesn't care about me, you know. And his wife, she is not my mother, and she doesn't think about me. She's not my mother.

Like the first student, this participant has been trying to negotiate new relationships to her parents, a transition which presents the possibility of healthy development as well as potentially serious risk. While her ability to psychosocially separate from her father's views about how she should live her life may indicate developmental progress, the nature of this separation also seems to constitute a loss for her. While an individual's search for greater independence and separation may typically involve loss, ideally, it does not involve isolation. George Vaillant (1977) explains this distinction quite clearly. "As we lose or separate ourselves from people that we love, we internalize them. . . . As adolescents consciously focus on all that is bad about their parents in order to extricate themselves from the backwards pull, they escape and take their parents with them" (p. 207). Demonstrating this pattern, the young adult career women in Levinson's study (1996) continued to

> experience their parents as important sources of emotional nurturance and moral authority, even as they strove to gain greater emotional independence . . . while seeking greater psychological (as well as social and geographical) distance from parents . . . , they also sought to maintain emotional ties and to avoid any actions that might rupture the relationship. (p. 242)

It is doubtful whether this young woman could describe her relationship to her father in such terms. Her separation from her father does not enable to maintain a close and healthy adult relationship with her father, at least during the time that we knew her. However, given the circumstances she faced, this separation may in fact contribute toward her own developing sense of identity, and it may be the wisest choice she can make in her circumstances.

Additionally, she has taken on increased financial (and perhaps emotional) responsibility for her mother. This added responsibility is freely chosen by the student and provides a way for her to care for her mother in difficult times. However, it also comes at a cost to her in that she must sacrifice her relationship with her father in order to provide for her mother. She must also take on the additional adult responsibilities of making enough money to support her mother as well as herself.

A third participant's transitioning relationships to her family also puts her in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Soon after this young woman was born in Central America, her parents came to the U.S., leaving her and her brother to stay with other relatives. Eventually, her brother decided to join their parents in the United States, and at the age of 20, the young woman in our study decided to come as well, to join her family in the U.S. Unfortunately, her relationship with her parents did not live up to her hopes, and she eventually decided that she must move away from them as well.

> When I was at age 21, I meet my biological mother and father. Before that, I was so depressed I never meet them, to have the opportunity to know who you are in your life. Always I ask the question, "How is my mother? How is my father?" I grew up with one of my mother's aunts. I was always living with my brother, always together. But we have to separate in 1992. I just stay in [my native country], and he came to U.S.A. So, it was hard for me. I think that's when I started to be independent, the first time that I was being on my own. So, we separate for four years. I came here in 1996 because I wanted to have the opportunity to meet my mother, to see my brother again, and to meet my little brother.
>
> When I came here, I found things that is not the same way that I thought. First, the language. Second, the education. Third, things in my house. I have problems in my house with my father because my father [has a substance abuse problem]. So the environment, it's not healthy. My mother has to work. At first, I wasn't able to work because I couldn't understand the language, but then, I got a job, and I go to school at the same time. And I try to help her, but I think she defends too much him. He's my father, but that's another thing that I want to be understand, if you not ready to get a child, don't do it. Don't do it because it's not easy for your babies and for you. Because when people is [abusing substances], they are not strong. They fall and they start to do things again, and my little brother, he's in not a good shape. He's not doing well in school. He drinks alcohol, and I talk to him, and I explain. I try to help him, but it's hard. It's so hard. He listen to me, but he didn't do the things that I told him. I say, "How do you see your future in six months and one year?" And want that he finish high school and go to college because he's very good at math.
>
> I would think, "What's wrong here? Why we don't get along each other?" And I was like, "Because we weren't together even for the very, very beginning. It was from the very beginning of that, we weren't together. I know the whole picture of my life now. I am trying to take that from a good, good example not for take things only in the bad picture, the black. I'm trying to see the things in the color too. Accept what is positive, what's negative.
>
> I have to be my own. I believe in education. Is the only thing that can give you freedom. Because if you've got your career. But this is important because I will get well paid so I can live just by myself. I can do that. And I think I can be independent from my family here, my brother, or even my boyfriend, or husband, whatever, so I can be independent.

Like the other young women described above, this participant's decision to separate from her family is not driven mainly by her developmental needs for increasing autonomy. In fact, she was actually searching for greater connection to her biological parents, and it is only with great pain that she chooses to move out of their house. She interprets their relational difficulties as resulting from the fact that for so long, they weren't together as a family. There has been no strong bond among them which she might now seek to renegotiate.

These three young women only superficially fit the general pattern of young adult development as involving increasing physical and psychological separations from family members. Their painful renegotiations of these relationships may contribute to what the literature describes as healthy development toward identity formation and autonomy. Yet such developments are spurred by situations where their well-being is at risk, and with growth toward autonomy, they also experience significant loss and sacrifice. The stories these participants tell are troubling and complex, and we suggest that rather than folding them into a perhaps overly narrow developmental trajectory suggested by life-span theorists, greater attention needs to be paid the unique circumstances of these individuals' lives. Further studies might contribute to increased understanding of how familial abuse and dysfunction impacts the course of individuals' life-span development.

Contrary to the established profile presented in the life-span literature, many of the participants in our study express the clear desire to remain interdependent with their family members and to allow them to have great influence in major decisions they make. Any moves they make toward greater separation are hesitant and uneasy. Instead of concluding that some of the participants in our study are developmentally-delayed, experiencing unhealthy attachments to their families of origin, we suggest that these students illustrate another way in which the life-span literature is too restrictive to account for their perspectives. There are several plausible explanations for why we do not see greater shifts toward separation and autonomy among the participants in our study. After allowing students to explain the importance they place on close family relationships and their hopes for continued interdependency, we will suggest some possible ways of understanding and interpreting these hopes.

Natalia describes the incredibly close relationship she has with her parents and with her brother. For her, the idea of separation invokes fear and loneliness.

> I just love my family. Parents, children, always together. It is important. Just family. From the very young age, I remember that. Parents and family together. For example when I came to my room and I see all family together in one table, and they hugged me, and they loved me, and they talking about this is the most

> important. For me, it is like my soul. I want to have it all the way. It is the most important thing, I think. If I didn't have my family I would feel alone. I will feel confused. I want to have all my friends and all people around me and I want to have a lot of fun always. And so I am really scary to be alone. It scares me. I don't like that.
>
> My brother understands me pretty good. He always joking. He knows everything about me. He says, "You don't look so good today. You should change this, this and this." And I will change it. I will change it. When my parents say something I will not care. If he says it looks okay, it means it looks great, and I will not change anything. When my birthday, I take my hair like this. He says, "Wow, it is wonderful." I don't touch it. No more. When he says that, I think it means I did a great job. I did something for him. Sometimes I tried to do this for him, and not for myself.

In our last interview with her, Natalia says she actually has become more like the kind of person her parents want her to be. Afraid that her father will not speak to her if she does things to make him angry, Natalia prefers not to "make any problems."

> If I do something to make him really mad, he will not talk to me. He didn't talk to my brother for a year. If he will not talk to me for a year and I will live with him, I know I better don't live there because I will always crying. If I live with somebody, I have to talk. I have to connect with people. He's my father. I'm living with him. If he will not talk to me it won't be any relationship. Because I know it will always be like, he was looking at me like, really angry. He will not talk to me.
>
> Over the course of this year, I became softer. I became more flexible. More often, I speak to my parents about things they want to hear, not because I just want to say something. I started using words that they want. I started changing to be the way they wanted me to be. I am studying hard. I am doing more things that they want to do.

Rather than apologizing for maintaining closeness to her parents and conforming to their wishes, Natalia thinks of these changes in herself as progress. She feels she can understand her parents better and seeks advice from her boyfriend's mother to help her "think more" about her family. While her course runs counter to that mapped for her by life-span theorists, Natalia feels she is moving in a positive direction.

Jonas also has an extraordinary close relationship with one of his parents. He has relied heavily on his mother's psychological and emotional support, saying she is the only close relationship that he currently has in his life. They have maintained this closeness despite the fact that he has been living in the U.S. for four years, while she has stayed in Central America.

> She advise me, all the time, which one is the best thing for me, the good and bad things that I do. She's really important. I love her. When I need to know something, I ask to my mother, and say, "Mom, what is this?" And she explain me something. Sometimes she didn't know what I was talking about, but she helped me a lot.
>
> My mother. I love my mother. I don't know how I can say about her, but she is a wonderful woman. I always say she is the best mother in the world. She can make good moral education, and also because she helps me. She put me in school to study. She send me to school. She paid for all that. She worked so hard for her. She was alone because my father was dead. And I don't know words to tell how is my mother. I love her that is the only thing I can say. I never had friends before. Just my mother.

From a life-span perspective, Jonas' closeness to his mother may prevent him from achieving his own identity and forging new intimate relationships. In her book about the ways that incomplete phases in women's development can lead them to depression, Maggie Scarf (1980) discusses the strategies that adolescents may employ when they cannot achieve satisfactory inner independence from their parents. One strategy is "that of putting distance between oneself and one's family: going very far away from the parents in order to create the façade of an achieved independence . . . [In some cases,] the adolescent has gone far away, but she or he hasn't succeeded in making the real separation" (p. 20). According to Scarf, such adolescents have not completed the inner work necessary to form a stable sense of self and identity. Reading Jonas' words through the lens of life-span theorists sounds a warning about the success of his personal development.

It is especially upsetting to Jonas, later in the semester, to hear that his mother has become sick and to be unsure about how serious her illness is. He is so distraught that he decides to leave the U.S. and return home to be with her. We did not have a chance to talk with Jonas about his decision to leave, but one of his teachers, Carol, remembers how difficult this period of time was for him.

> He was very worried about his mother. All the time. She was supposed to have some surgery. He thought she would die. And he was constantly coming in crying and telling me he was going to leave the next week to go home. And then he'd stay, and then he'd go. He was in counseling. He was going down there all the time. He was always vocal about his feelings.

> So, I really got to the point where I was uneasy with him being in the States. I kept thinking, "If he doesn't get home, and get near his mother and his family . . ." He had a number of brothers, one of whom I think was a doctor and was kind of giving him the news about the mother, but he felt like they were withholding information because he was here, and his mother wouldn't tell him. His mother wouldn't speak to him on the phone because she was afraid that she would worry him too much. And here's the great irony: That the kid was out of his mind. If only his mother had gotten on the phone a couple of times, it might have been better.

Jonas' return home might alarm life-span theorists in that it might have consequences for his ability to make developmental progress toward greater independence. However, his return certainly seems understandable given the stress and concern any son might feel in similar circumstances.

Why don't these students seek the autonomy that life-span theorists see as crucial to successfully attaining adulthood? We wonder if issues of culture and gender, as well the experience of immigration, may combine to create a different type of life course for the participants in our study. Additionally, we point to the importance of developmental capacity in determining an individual's readiness to renegotiate important relationships.

The vast majority of the individuals studied by life-span theorists have grown up in the United States and may therefore have notions about independence and autonomy that differ from those held by members of other cultures. For example, although American students might be more likely to leave their parents' homes when they go to college, they are not necessarily more independent in the ways that they make decisions. Instead, their decisions may simply be shaped by the opinions of different people in their lives, their friends and larger peer group. Having achieved a measure of physical separation from their parents, they may not achieve any increased independence or autonomy of thought.

Another argument some cultural psychologists make is that conceptions of the self are influenced significantly by cultural biases. According to Markus and Kitayama (1997), Americans in general are likely to view individuals as separate entities, possessing particular attributes that are relatively unrelated to context.

> Despite the growing body of psychological and anthropological evidence that people hold divergent views about the self, most of what psychologists currently know about human nature is based on one particular view—the so-called Western view of the individual as an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity who (a) comprises a unique configuration of internal attributes (e.g., traits, abilities,

> motives, and values) and (b) behaves primarily as a consequence of those internal attributes. (p. 264)

In contrast, many Asian, African, southern European, and Latin-American cultures are more likely to have a more interdependent view of selfhood. For these cultures, the self is understood as it relates to other people and in specific contexts.

> With respect to cognition, for example, for those with interdependent selves, in contrast to those with independent selves, some aspects of knowledge representation and some of the processes involved in social and nonsocial thinking alike are influenced by a pervasive attentiveness to the relevant *others* in the social context. Thus, one's actions are more likely to be seen as situationally bound, and characterizations of the individual will include this context. Furthermore, for those with interdependent construals of the self, both the expression and the experience of emotions and motives may be significantly shaped and governed by a consideration of the reactions of others. (p. 225)

This conception of the self as interdependent would not, therefore, be likely to appear among the individuals included in the life-span development studies. Using only the American conception of an independent self as a standard, other conceptions of the self would appear atypical, less developed. Such a perspective wrongly equates cultural differences with indications of differences in developmental progression.

Many of the learners in our study acknowledge that their decisions are ones that make sense for them, their families, and other members of their culture, but they realize that their values run counter to U.S. cultural expectations. Tak-Jang explains why, at age 27, he decided to come with his parents to the U.S. and enroll at BHCC, even though he would have personally preferred to stay in Hong Kong.

> My goal is to have some profession and then make my family happy. Last year, I didn't want to come here. But my family really wanted me to study something. I thought, so many [people from my city] want to come to U.S.A., but now I get a chance. So, I want to do it. I want to do whatever. If I just only thought of my age, I didn't want to come here. I graduate in high school eight or nine years ago. I have been working a lot of jobs in [my native city]. I have no going to school for a long time. Now, I need to pick up my school back. It's so difficult.
>
> My family have some expectations on me. I have a brother. You can say he's a bad guy. There were some problems. And then my parents was so upset what he did and then cut the relationship from him. And then now, they just got the last son is me. And then I want to do something to make up for that. I want to do something to make them feel a hope, an expectation of another son. Because one son has

> already hurt them. Now they got last chance on me. So I thought about this and say, okay I try. So I want to come to U.S.A. I want to do whatever. I think for Americans, that's a fool action, right? Because the parents [in my native country] always make some expectations on their son. I think some Americans, they think that [people in my native country] have a foolish thought, a foolish mind. Maybe if I didn't make that decision, I'd stay in [my native city]. I just like working in hotel or do some clerk job, or something like that. But now, I have been here for near one year. I accept studying and working and save some money. Now I begin to accept all those things.

Tak-Jang's explanation illustrates his awareness of the different value systems operating in his native country and in the United States. From the perspective of his native country, Tak-Jang's decision to follow his parents' wishes represents the natural fulfillment of his parents' expectations. From an American perspective, Tak-Jang's decision might appear to be "a fool action," the product of "a foolish thought, a foolish mind." Aware of these differences in perspective, Tak-Jang accepts the decisions he has made.

Minh was also reluctant to leave her home country, where she was about to complete her university education. However, she decided to come with her parents because she was raised believing that children should respect the decisions of their parents.

> It make me very sad to leave [my native country]. But, I have no choice because I'm the oldest in my family. So I help my parents a lot because my parents can't speak English, and I can speak a little bit. So, I think I can help them in the new country. It's very difficult for them in the new country, so I have to follow. I didn't want to go to United States because I will get a good job in [my native country]. And I have a lot of friends [there]. My environment is very good. But I have no choice because my parents want me to leave. I didn't say I would not come to the U.S. Because I love my parents I didn't say that. Also, I feel very sad, but I didn't say that because they disagree. Our country custom is children have to listen to the parents. It's not in the United States. When I lived in my country, my friend called to my house and you know what my father said? "She's not home. She sleeps. She's not home." Sometimes that made me angry, but I have no choice. I don't know, but I always feel afraid when speaking to my parents, face-to-face to my parents. Now it's a little bit easy because America and because now I'm older. I can make a decision without my parents. But they say that almost all the parents love their children, and they want their children have a good husband, have a good family, have a good education.

Like Tak-Jang, Minh clearly identifies a difference in cultural values about the ideal conception of the self. However, she has begun to make more of her own decisions, in part due to her age, and in part because that is easier to do in America.

Female students might also experience less incentive to or need for differentiation from their parents than male students do. Scarf (1980) argues that women are more likely than men to find their sense of self-esteem and worth in the context of their intimate relationships. Their dreams for the future, then, are more likely to be formed and fulfilled in relation to important others in their lives. Scarf suggests that before a young woman has formed an intimate relationship with a boyfriend or husband,[8] she may allow some parts of her plans and her self to remain open to the influence of this hoped-for partner, and she will therefore experience less need to differentiate from her parents. "A sense of very firm ego boundaries, of knowing who one is and what one wants and where one is going, can be a relative disadvantage when it comes right down to the difficult—yet critically important—life business of establishing a love bond" (p. 246). In women's development, therefore, the establishment of an independent identity may not precede the formation of intimate relationships. These two tasks may happen simultaneously and symbiotically.

One final factor that may influence the closeness of some participants' relationships with their families of origin relates to their experiences as immigrants. For many, the experience of leaving their home countries and moving to the U.S. with their families may have strengthened the bonds between family members.

Sonja talks about how the war in her home country, which prompted her family's move, has made her realize how important her family is to her.

> My family is still number one in my life, my mother and my father, especially now in this situation. I have an uncle over there. And my whole father's relatives, everybody's over there in [my native country]. My uncle is in a lot of bombing. I think after the bombing in [my city], I think now they are even more important to me.

Others also realize that their parents depend on them. Fawzia's mother still lives in their native country, and Fawzia sends her money for support. Minh's parents rely on her to help them when they have difficulty communicating in English. Benetta feels gratitude for the sacrifices her mother has made to provide a better life for her and her family.

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[8] We are aware of this author's implicit expectation (described here and in other places in this chapter) that young females will form only heterosexual intimate relationships. We acknowledge the limitations of this perspective but do not specifically include a discussion of same-sex relationships since none are described among the participants in our study.

> My mom spend money for me to be here, and all the time she been here, and she will try to get down residence and stuff like that for me and my brother. You know, I want to stay here and help her.

Thus, the complexity of these participants' lives illustrates a weakness in life-span theories. Their reliance on American cultural constructs of the self and its developmental progression limits their depiction of the various paths development can take. As is the case with their explanations of career transitions, this literature can not account for important differences in how young adults understand their relationships to their families of origin. More complex and inclusive could be informed by considering issues of culture, gender, and life experience. Regarding family transitions through a developmental lens also contributes important distinctions.

How Participants Construct their Beliefs about Family

Growing Away From Instrumental Ways of Understanding

The psychological relationship an individual is able to form with his parents also depends upon that individual's developmental capacity. Yousef, who operates predominantly with Instrumental ways of understanding, had not seen his family in a couple of years and was excited about the possibility of visiting them that coming September. He looked forward to bringing them gifts and making them happy.

> I think I go [to see my parents in] September. I'm excited to take some gifts for them. From here you take many things, like you take many things from here. But problem how you take this from here to there. If you ship things by airplane bit expensive. You don't have to take too much luggage. Take only little thing, something like you find Boston on the t-shirts. I have to bring some presents for them. I'm also excited to take some watch from here. Gold also. I want to bring them presents because they become more happy then. You can give them money but money I think to finish, you give them something more than good. Everybody want his family to be happy, friendly. The best thing [about their happiness is] to give them enough money. If they have enough money they can do other things, like they can go to eat out in the restaurant. They go to visit another country. [That's important to me because] if I help them, they will help me because in the past they help me so much. They give me money to come here, they send me to school, they help me so much. Without them I can't go to school. I can't go.

Having lived apart from his parents for two years, Yousef might seem to be successfully achieving separation so that he might fully form his own identity. He does not seem to be completely defined by his parents' wishes and hopes for him, does not show indications that his parents' point of view influences the forming of his own point of view. However, Yousef has not yet developed the capacity to internalize his parents' wishes and hopes for him. Instead, he relates to their wishes and hopes by viewing them in terms of their possible consequences for him. It is important to him to help his parents, and if he helps them, they in turn, will help him.

Yousef also focuses on the concrete pleasures he will experience upon seeing his parents and on the concrete things he can give them to make them happy. He demonstrates his concrete understanding of his parents pleasure in terms of the specific concrete things he can give them such as t-shirts, watches, and money.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

For most of the participants in our study, the Socializing way of understanding is the dominant way of making meaning, and all of the participants in our study possess it to some degree. As is the case with Minh and Tak-Jang, even when these learners can identify that their own wishes for themselves are different from those of their parents, it is extremely upsetting and viewed personally as wrong to act on behalf of these wishes. In such cases, the individual may alter her beliefs and wishes to be more in line with those of important others in her life. Ling-Hui, who also operates predominantly from a Socializing way of understanding, describes how she has chosen to follow the wishes of her family and friends.

> I went to Australia before. I study English there, and I think I want stay there, but my family say, "Come to America." I told them, "I don't want to come here," but they forced me to come here because my aunts and uncles say better to come here, so my mother believes that. But also, I didn't very strong say, "I don't want to come here. I want to stay in Australia." I think it's useless, so I didn't do that. And I think, maybe, like, their decision is better than my decision because maybe I want to study there just because I make some friends there, and I used to the environment there. And, I think if I came here, I will have many pressures, and my sister come here, so they will compare us. I don't like that. So, I want to study there by myself. And, I don't know. I think if I had stayed in Australia by myself, maybe I was lazy and go to school late. And sometimes play. I want to be very good student, I think. Because sometimes people have to be pushed, and some people need a little bit of pressure, I think.

Ling-Hui can acknowledge the existence of conflict between her beliefs and those of her parents. She feels very uncomfortable, though, in accepting this conflict with her parents and seeks to decrease it in favor of a more mutual resolution which will preserve the fabric of their relationship. She accomplishes this resolution by claiming that her parents actually can make a better decision than she can, that following their wishes rather than her own initial opinions is actually in her own best interest. She relies on her parents' opinions to help her form her own and thus demonstrates her reliance on Socializing ways of understanding.

Growing Toward Self-Authoring Ways of Understanding

In contrast, those participants who have developed a greater sense of Self-Authorship have negotiated a relationship with their parents that enables them to make more decisions for themselves. It is important to note that these students are not necessarily interested in severing the relationship or even making the relationship less central in their lives. They need not embrace American conceptions of independent selves. Instead, their role in relationship to their parents allows them to take on new, more adult responsibilities while maintaining interdependent conceptions of their selves.

Benetta describes how she is able to talk with her mother and listen to her mother's advice and opinions. She does not follow this advice blindly but considers it along with her other thoughts and retains the authority for making her own decisions.

> I have a big problem with my mother because she says that I have to go, I *have* to go back to my country, and get my career there, my degree. She says it's too difficult for me to get here because it will take long time, and she says, "Baby, there's school for you if you come back to our country. It will be easy for you, and it's your language." But, that is not what are my plans to do because I want to get my career here with English. And that's why I want to stay here, and she say, "No, baby, come back to your country, to my country and do it." But it's my decision. I am going to stay here. It is hard when we disagree about important things. But I think she understands. She understands. Maybe not right now, but she will.

Achieving this degree of Self-Authorship does not require Benetta to establish physical or emotional distance from her mother. In fact, she describes their relationship as "very good" and claims her mother as her "best friend." Her mother's understanding and acceptance of her and her choices, however, enables Benetta to develop Self-Authoring abilities without severing the relationship. In this instance, both mother and daughter can accept their differences in opinion and discuss these differences in order for Benetta to reach her own decision *and* maintain a strong relationship with her mother.

Another student developing toward Self-Authoring ways of understanding, Serge has a very interdependent relationship with his parents, taking advice from them and feeling depressed when his mother doesn't support his decisions. However, there are times when Serge decides to make decisions for himself, decisions which run counter to the expectations and values of his parents. He is also taking on increasing responsibility in the family. He can give advice to his parents, and he helps to raise his younger brothers and sisters.

> Some decisions I make by myself. Sometimes I have to ask my mom about something if she likes it, or my brother. If she likes it okay then I go forward. I try to find if the decision I make is going to be good for me, or if everyone around me is going to be supportive. Sometimes if my mom is not supporting me in something, then I feel very depressed. Like I am doing something that she doesn't really like. That's why I always ask her about if she likes what I am doing or she doesn't like what I am doing. 'Cause I really like my mom.
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> I think it is a part of the way we grew up and it is a part of my culture that you have to listen to your parents and respect your parents and honor your parents. And it is a part of my religion, too. Sometimes you don't want to take advice. Sometimes they can give you it, but you don't want to take it. You think it is bad. Sometimes if you sit down and go over what they told you, you will see that sometimes there is positive things you can take for yourself. Because they love you, and if they love you they are never gonna let you go. They would never let you fall. And then when you are 27 or 30 years old, their parents always try to help you. Even when you are married, they always think they are your parents and they can come anytime and help you and say, "This is no good. This is what you have to do." I don't find it a problem. In a way it has a lot of my religion in it and my culture built in. I don't think it is a problem for me. Sometimes taking advice from your parents is really good.
>
> Some decision I want to take I don't go to them. Like if I wanted to take a decision about I wanted to have a house in [my native country], and I know they don't want me to. That's a decision for myself. And I say that I want to have a house because when I am retired and I can go back. They say "no." They know they not going to have a house [in my native country] because it is too dangerous now. Well that is their opinion about it. I have my own opinion about it. I have my own country. We have a little, not a fight, but a little discussion about it. But I really know if I want to do it in the future, to build a house, I am going to build it. Because it is my idea, and I am going to do it, and nobody's going to take it from me.

> I am the oldest in the family. If my parents cannot make a decision they come to me and sit down with me and say, "Serge I'm going to take this and this and this. What do you think about it?" So I can make you a part of responsible. So you know I say, why do my parents make me sit down and tell me? They can do it for themselves. But they you can be their friend if you have something you have to come and talk to them. That's really good and I want to keep the same way with my kids.

Like many of our other participants, Serge is aware of the ways that taking advice is part of his culture and religion in ways that might contrast with American values. He chooses to continue to follow these practices in most situations. There are times, however, when he makes decisions that go against the wishes of his parents. Whether or not he follows their advice, however, does not tell us about his developmental capabilities. What is important is that he freely chooses when and why he will follow his parents' advice and when to follow his own wishes.

Serge's description of his new familial responsibilities also demonstrate the ways that he retains an interdependent view of self while achieving Self-Authoring ways of understanding. His parents have begun to consult him as they make decisions that impact the family. While he does not provide detailed descriptions of how he helps them make these decisions, he does not appear threatened by his parents' lack of agreement on the best possible course of action. Neither does he describe feelings of pressure in giving them his own opinion. While there is not enough data here to demonstrate conclusively that Serge experiences these new responsibilities using a Self-Authoring way of understanding, we include them here as an example of one way an individual might develop his own identity without weakening or threatening the bonds he has to his parents.

Examining the changes the participants in our study undergo in their family relationships reveals a complex interplay among issues of age, life experience, culture, gender, and developmental capacity. Attending to these issues reveals important patterns among the students in our study. They also provide interesting explanations for some of the ways the students in our study differ from each other and from the life-span literature. In the following section, we examine one more age-related transition, the forming and deepening of love relationships.

Intimacy Transitions

According to life-span theorists, another major task for young adults in their twenties is to establish an intimate relationship, a love relationship generally leading to marriage and children (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1964, 1968; Levinson, 1978; 1996; Scarf, 1980; Vaillant, 1977; Wigfield et al, 1996; Wortley & Amatea, 1982). According to Erikson (1964, 1968), as young adults develop their own sense of identity they become ready to form close affiliations, to commit themselves to others in newly intimate ways. The forming of these bonds is an important developmental progression, for "the avoidance of such experiences because of a fear of ego loss may lead to a deep sense of isolation and consequent self-absorption" (1964, p. 264). While this transition has been undertaken by some of the participants in our study, many do not seem focused on this aspect of their lives (see Table 5).

Table 5: Intimacy Transitions

Name	Intimacy Transition
Yousef	Decided not to marry the girlfriend he loves in order to marry the girl his father chose for him. Made that decision because his father was sick, he was afraid that the two families would fight, is following his religious and cultural beliefs. But, he still loves his first girlfriend and has continued to write letters to her. Considers bringing her to the U.S. Feels lonely in the U.S. without his family.
Xuan	In the first semester, tries to decide between her boyfriend she has dated for two years and a new boy she is seeing.
Minh	Has a boyfriend who lives in a nearby state who visits her every two weeks, and whom she hopes to marry. She describes him as very hard working, encouraging of her, a "model" for her to follow. Says she has no friends.
Gilles	Worries about his friends and says he doesn't have too many. Some smoke, stay out late, act crazy, drink and drive. One from his home country died after an illness. Another was drinking and died after falling into a river.
Abdel	Misses friends from home country very much. Has not made friends in the U.S. because he feels that Americans are not open or friendly. Is very busy, too, and must concentrate on school.
Ling-Hui	No mention.
Jonas	A relationship with his girlfriend ended six months before our first interviews. Says he doesn't have friends because he isn't social, doesn't drink or smoke. Didn't have friends in his native country either, just his mother.
Armand	No mention.
Tak-Jang	No mention.
Natalia	Has a boyfriend (her brother's roommate) who is very important to her. He "pushes" her, encouraging her and helping her to study. Mentions good relations with friends.
Fawzia	Refers to new friends she is making, doesn't discuss them in detail.
Benetta	Is married and lives with husband.
Gabriela	Has made some friends in the U.S. who have given her a lot of support.
Marie	Says she has no friends and feels lonely.
Sonja	Had many friends in her native country; has had some trouble making friends in the U.S. It is important to her to be completely honest with her friends if they are to be close. In second semester, meets boyfriend with whom she becomes very close.
Serge	Refers briefly to a girlfriend as someone who helps him memorize vocabulary words.
Fei-Wen	Is married; husband lives in her native country. Had many friends there but feels that others don't need her in U.S. Meets some new people over the course of the year.

Three of the participants in our study (Yousef, Benetta, and Fei-Wen) are married; however, neither Fei-Wen nor Benetta speak much about their husbands in their interviews. Fei-Wen's husband still lives in China, a situation that makes communication between them difficult. Benetta's husband, Jorge, lives with her in the U.S. She says only that he helps and supports her. Yousef, on the other hand, speaks in depth about his decision to follow his father's wishes and marry a girl that he doesn't love instead of the one he does love.

> I used to love one girl named Selam. But my father, he don't like her. I didn't marry her. But I married as he liked because he tell me, "marry to my family." I married from his family. Most of people in [my native country], they married family. You can't marry from other place. The girl I love is different family. If I don't marry from family, father will become angry. He tell me, "I don't like this one." Also, he's sick, you know. I think he die of this something.
>
> I leave my heart. I know this is not right decision, but I do this because of my father only. He's sick. I like other decision, but no way to do that. Something bad might happen if I marry the girl I want. You have to do the rule of religion, you know. I am Muslim. You have to marry from your family first. Second, you can keep Sabbath. Also, I have to go by my father. My religion says you have to go behind your father and your mother. I was choosing my father over myself. But if I had to choose again, I would choose my first girlfriend because my heart likes this one. Yeah, I feel good and very happy. All my heart going to her. But I don't feel anything about my wife now. In America, you have to marry to one you want. Yeah, different rules. Sometime I think I brought her here. I go back there, and I married her. Sometime, my mind tell me that. (laughter). Maybe my father would be upset; yeah, of course. But, sometimes, I think I marry by secret. We still have relationship. I send letters to her. She send letters to me. Many times, my father tells me, "don't send letters." I do it anyway. Sometimes I call.

Yousef struggles to find a way out of this dilemma. Conflicting beliefs send different messages to him about what is most important about the formation of intimate relationships. Choosing a partner out of feelings of love and feelings of intimacy may coincide more closely with Erikson's description of a healthy developmental progression. Yousef recognizes this choice as one that aligns with American beliefs about marriage. However, the cultural and religious practices of his native country suggest that Yousef should act according to different priorities. He wonders about what the consequences might have been had he not married within his father's family.

> I look for my father because he's sick is his problem. And if I didn't do it, how come might he do? Bad things might happen. Maybe my family and her family fight together. Yeah, maybe they'd fight together, do something wrong.

> I have to cover my family first. Because maybe nobody come to marry this girl. She's married [in the family]. Better than other men.

Given the importance of his marriage partner to the continued good familial relations, Yousef did not feel that he could act simply according to his own wishes. His dilemma indicates that there may be important differences among cultural priorities for individual development. While our data here is limited, we believe that it points to the need for further investigations of the heterogeneity of cultural beliefs about the development of intimate relationships. Such investigations would add greater complexity to the life-span theories.

Six of the participants in our study (Minh, Xuan, Tak-Jang, Natalia, Serge, and Sonja) are in dating relationships for at least some portion of our study. Minh speaks briefly about the possibility that she will marry her boyfriend.

> My boyfriend, he's very computer science. And maybe I'm marriage to him, and we are study computer. We intend to have our own small business about computers in New York. We just intend to sell computer software, something like this.

The other five do not mention specific plans for the future of their relationships, and only Xuan and Natalia talk about these relationships in any detail. Later in this section, we will explore their comments using a developmental lens.

Eight students are single and give no indication that they are in any romantic relationships. While some talk about their feelings of loneliness and longing for friendship, none mention that they specifically want a romantic relationship. However, several include references to future spouses and children when they talk about their dreams for the future, so it seems that love relationships are important for the participants in our study.

Why do so many of the participants in our study choose not to focus on developing intimate love relationships when life-span theorists suggest that it should be a dominant theme at this stage in their lives? For the female students, gender may play a role. Another possible explanation is that moving from their own countries to the U.S. has created significant upheaval in their social lives, interrupting and delaying the formation of intimate relationships for many.

Maggie Scarf (1980) argues that women's lives are much less likely to follow the linear course predicted for men's lives.

> Women's lives, if you look at them over time, rarely follow a straight line from "identity" to "intimacy" and so forth. On the contrary, their unfolding selfhood seems to occur in cycles, or phases, rather than in a movement forward, or in a single direction. If you look at where a woman has been, and what her major goals have been in different 10-year segments of her life, you'll often find sudden discontinuities, surprises—and frequently astonishing ingenuity and invention! There's far more shifting of direction, of moving off in a new way to make up for time lost, and of returning, later in life, to goals and preoccupations that have been abandoned earlier, in a way that might have seemed final then. There is by no means that undeviating male progression from "identity" to "intimacy" to "generativity" . . . that Erik Erikson has so tellingly described. (p. 248)

These discontinuities may be especially evident among women who hope to combine career and family in their lives. Such goals may lead to a dilemma within women because each role prescribes different types of demands upon her, different expectations for her behavior. Sociologist Mirra Komarovsky sees these differences as diametrically opposed, necessitating the development of two different selves.

> Young adult females who are . . . trying to develop themselves in both work and love simultaneously, are also having to develop two differing kinds of selves simultaneously. In her intimate life, as she relates to her opposite sex partner, this young woman is expected to be someone warm and emotional, nurturant, expressive, noncompetitive, supportive, more compliant, and so forth . . . The built-in conflict, however, and the ambivalent set of signals with which she must deal, stems from the fact that in her occupational world she'll have to show much more of the typically masculine forms of behavior-self-assertion, competitiveness, control, dominance, a push toward mastery . . . The ambitious woman seems to be required, both by inward and outward pressures, to evolve not a single "self" or personality, but two at once! (Komarovsky as quoted in Scarf, 1980 p. 247)

While some women do commit themselves to these dual goals, many women in their twenties choose to prioritize one goal, delaying or diminishing the importance of the other. Given the fact that so many of the participants in our study are preoccupied with academic achievement and the attainment of their career objectives, they may feel that the pursuit of intimate love relationships can wait until later.

Finally, there may be few intimate relationships among the participants in our study due to the fact that they have come to this country so recently. Many speak about the difficulties they have faced even meeting people and making friends in a new language and new culture. Abdel, for example, seems unhappily lonely.

> Like I live here two years, and I don't have no friends! That's terrible. Strange, very strange. I guess I feel hurt. Like, I have something wrong with me.

And Fei-Wen attributes her difficulty in meeting people to the fact that Americans don't seem to need her friendship the way that she needs theirs.

> In [my native country] I have many friends, I can easily communicate with others. But the American, sometimes I feel I need to communicate with others, but others don't need me. So sometimes I feel a little different.

Given these difficulties, many of the participants in our study may have at least interrupted their development of intimate relationships. These difficulties might also explain why so many have remained close to their families, relying on them for emotional and psychological support.

How Participants Construct their Beliefs about Intimate Relationships

Growing Away From Instrumental Ways of Understanding

Xuan ended one relationship and began a new one during the course of our study. She explains the ways that she makes decisions about relationships, describing the kinds of things that are important to her in a dating partner. While Xuan has developed some Socializing ways of understanding, here she demonstrates some Instrumental ways of understanding that she has not completely relinquished.

> I'm 19. I'm too young to think about staying with anyone long term. I'm not ready to make a commitment. I fought with my boyfriend. And that's what shows me I'm not committed. But if a guy really treat me right and everything that I wanted, you know—then I might choose him. Like, this boyfriend, now, treat me good. He's good to me. He helps me with a lot of work. Well, everything's good, so far. I don't disagree with him. I trust him. How can I tell? Depends—depends how they're treating me. Do they call me constantly? That's good. It shows that they're thinking of you.

For Xuan, a boyfriend is good and worthy of trust according to the concrete ways that he behaves toward her. A good boyfriend helps her with work, calls her constantly, and thinks of her. She also measures the relationship by her own behavior. If she fights with her boyfriend, she knows she is not committed to him. Rather than looking to her inner states such as feelings and sense of herself, which would demonstrate a more Socializing way of understanding, Xuan focuses instead on fighting, a specific and concrete action, to inform her decision.

Xuan does indicate that agreement with her boyfriend is important to her. However, in this brief excerpt we see no indication that she focuses on her boyfriend's views and feelings. Xuan does not try to evaluate herself or the relationship from the perspective of either her past or current partner. Therefore, her emphasis seems less on mutuality and agreement as an emotional quality between them and more on agreement as it is manifested in specific behaviors: the presence or lack of phone calls and fights.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

Natalia's description of her relationship provides a contrasting example. Her struggle concerns how she can preserve a good relationship with her brother, who does not always appreciate her interest in her new boyfriend. This source of tension is particularly difficult for Natalia to avoid since her boyfriend and brother are roommates.

> He is roommates with my brother. They take apartment together. For me it is really hard, if something goes wrong between us, I hope that he will not have a problem with my brother. So for me, [if I have problems in my family] I can't say to him. I try to say it and, then, no I can't. I care about my brother, and it really scares me that if they have a problem. Just I know that my brother jealous me, and sometimes I don't want to go there because I know that my brother will be like, "Okay, okay, you go to him. It's okay." He don't like it. He broken a little bit. He is jealous a little bit. I always was with him. It was just my brother. And right now, there is another one for me. So he is like, "Okay. You go with him." He will say to me, but I don't like it. "I jealous you. Why are you going there?" And I say, "Okay, I love you, too." And he say, " Love me too? No. You love him, too." He will say to me like that.

Natalia feels uncomfortable with this conflict because she is particularly concerned not to hurt either man's feelings. She fears that a disagreement between her brother and boyfriend would place her in the position of having to sacrifice one for the other, of having to choose one loyalty over the other. The conflict between these two loyalties threatens her sense of self-integrity. She frames her behavior, then, in terms of how she can keep both as happy as possible, accepting responsibility for their feelings about her and about each other. In fact, Natalia reports difficulty in addressing any problems with her boyfriend. She feels more comfortable talking to someone else about problems she has with him.

> Probably I would go to him to speak with him about some stuff but not about him. Sometimes I want to say something about him, not good, and I go to [my parents]

> sometimes. But if I want to speak about something else like children or parents then I go to him. For me it is easier.

Natalia's fear of disagreeing with or disappointing either man suggests that she experiences conflict as a threat to her relationships. Attentive to the needs and feelings of others, Natalia is not able to separate them from her own needs and feelings about the situation.

Growing Toward Self-Authoring Ways of Understanding

Sonja thinks about conflict and disagreement in her relationships quite differently. Growing away from more Socializing ways of understanding, Sonja is able to approach her relationships with greater Self-Authorship. In this excerpt, she begins to talk about her boyfriend, and then her comments move to a more general level as she describes the qualities that are important to her in all close relationships.

> Recently, I really find a person that's very, very important to me. And instead of like bunch of friends I put him because he's the only one who is here, so he's my boyfriend and my best friend at the same time. What does it mean to me to have a best friend? My best friend has to feel with me. I am very complicated person. I know that. I am very complicated because I am very honest. Sometimes I am like cruelly honest. And my best friend and person who is with me has to know how to deal with it.
>
> I don't like to pretend. Like, I'm not the kind of person who my best friend will come and say, what do you think, is this good? And you know that you're supposed to say it's good because she liked it. I would say, "No, it's ugly." I would say "It's ugly, it's awful." Not to hurt her. I can [lie to] people, but I don't want to do it. Because people that I care about. And that's what I want them to understand. I would do that with the people that I know, with the people that I'm close but not like. I never had a huge bunch of people as my best friend. I always had 3, 4 person, and I want that person to understand that. I don't want to change myself with that people. And I don't want them [to change for me]. Because I'm going to accept them the way they are. Nobody's perfect.
>
> I'm trying to learn not to be very honest with the people that are not close to me. If they asked me I would say yeah, maybe I would, I don't feel very nice about it, but it's okay. But if I had to do it with a person who I think is close to me, then that person is either won't be close to me anymore. I won't be close because if I start to lie, just to make that person happy, that's not the person that could be my real friend. Or that person have to accept that. I explain to them, that's me, that's how I am. I am very honest, especially with my friend. I don't ask for them, you have to.

> It's up to you if you want, that's good, we could be great friends. If you can't, we could still be friends, but not like best, best, best friends.
>
> I always say what I think. And I have very strange way of making jokes, but I always say them. And that's why. I just feel that I don't have anything to hide from people. I don't have anything to be ashamed of in my life. That's why I feel comfortable to say everything. Even something that most people would not say, I say. It's very important for the relationship for people to understand that, and I don't want to lie to them even about that.

Sonja is able to understand others' perspectives on her honesty, and she is aware of how a friend might be hurt by her strong opinions. However, rather than taking responsibility for the ways that others might be hurt, Sonja explains that it is more important to her to say what she really believes and *not* what she thinks others want to hear. In this way, she shows that she has a sense of herself that is separate and very different from the sense that other people may have of her. She doesn't want to change just to please other people, and although her close friends' acceptance of her is important, she would like them to be able to accept her as she is. Sonja also shows some ability to regulate her behavior on behalf on the principles that are important to her. She decides how and when she will choose to lie or to be honest with another person, illustrating that her reactions are not completely dependent on external circumstances.

The students in our study describe important transitions they are making in preparing for careers, in their relationships to their families, and to a lesser extent, in their intimate relationships. While the life-span literature also draws attention to the importance of these transitions and provides interesting ways of understanding them, it does not adequately account for the complexities and variations across culture, gender, or life experience. We also believe that bringing a developmental perspective to these issues enables us to illuminate the different ways that individuals understand the nature of these transitions.

As a group, these students experience multiple areas of stress and support in their lives. We hear heartening stories of familial support, intimate connections, and hopeful dreams for the future. We also hear stories of painful relational tension, loneliness, and strain. It is in relation to these larger contexts that the participants in our study locate one new aspect of their identity, their role as students in an American community college. Their ability to take on this new role and to develop and maintain belief in themselves as students will also influence their ability to pursue and attain their life dreams. We present our interpretation of how students negotiate this transition in the next section. The many sources of stress that participants describe also provide convincing evidence of the importance of teacher and peer supports within the program. We will take up these topics in a later section, where we describe and interpret the functions of the holding environments for these students.

SECTION IV: ACCULTURATION

In addition to the transitions related to age that participants in our study are making, they are also making another transition, growing acculturated to different roles and environments. As new residents of the United States, they are learning how to function successfully in this culture. In particular, they are learning how to understand and manage the role of student in an American institution of higher education. Such transitions can be difficult for individuals to make due to inequities of power and ideology within our society and its educational systems. In many ways then, the participants in our study began their programs with marginalized status and are seeking ways to gain access to greater social, economic, and political standing.

In the past few decades, community colleges have provided immigrant and minority students access to higher education (Valadez, 1993). Despite their successes, critics have suggested that they, like other educational institutions, also prevent many of these students from succeeding because they reproduce the existing inequalities and social hierarchies in our society (Herideen, 1998; Pincus, 1994; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Shaw, Valadez & Rhoads, 1999). When the structure of community colleges mirrors that of the larger society, students who enter having had greater social and economic advantages are more likely to be highly rewarded. They may be channeled into academic tracks and marked as good candidates for transfer to more prestigious colleges and universities. Those entering with fewer advantages are over-represented in vocational tracks and their ambitions for graduation and transfer are often stunted (Pincus, 1994; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Shaw, Rhoads & Valadez, 1999; Valadez, 1993).

The participants in our study run the risk of falling into this second group. New to this country and its educational institutions, they do not yet possess the linguistic and social competencies required for them to reach their academic and occupational goals. In the literature on acculturation, these competencies are referred to as "cultural capital" because they constitute the knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes, and meanings that are possessed by the dominant classes and traditionally rewarded in society (Rendon, 1999; Rhoads, 1999; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Trujillo & Diaz, 1999; Valadez, 1999). Much of the knowledge and experience of immigrant students such as ours stems from their cultural background and is not relevant to or rewarded in traditional academic settings. Institutional messages about what types of knowledge are valued are therefore embedded in larger messages, devaluing students' cultural identities (Herideen, 1998; Lin, 1999; Rhoads, 1999; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Valadez, 1993).

In this section, we will describe the nature of the transition the participants in our study have to make and the ways that larger messages about their cultural identities influence this transition. However, individuals do not simply absorb messages passively but are actively engaged in making sense of their experiences. We will therefore show how the students undertake these transitions and respond to the ways that individuals and institutions act to keep them in the margins. The ability that individuals possess to respond actively and creatively in the face of these kinds of constraints is known as agency (Lin, 1999; Rhoads, 1999; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Shaw, 1999). For the students in our study, making a successful transition of acculturation may require them to possess certain abilities, certain kinds of agency. First, they must be able to identify and learn the skills and behaviors that are rewarded in the institution and necessary for academic success. They must also possess the ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the implicit messages that accompany their socialization process. In exploring the manners in which the participants in our study responded to their marginalized status, we find that developmental capacity helps determine the way that individuals construct a sense of their own agency.

Acquiring Cultural Capital

While the students in our study do not use the term "cultural capital," they do describe the particular skills and types of knowledge they need in order to succeed in the world of higher education. In fact, many of their explanations about the qualities of a good student and the ways that they learn emphasize these features. These skills are difficult for students to learn because they may require high levels of linguistic and cultural fluency. Sonja describes her feelings when she realized how many particular skills and sets of knowledge she had to acquire.

> When I first came here I was completely lost. I didn't know what to do, where to start. First of all it's completely different. I came to a completely different country. I didn't know the way of learning, what they learn, or the language. Everything was like no. I didn't know anything when I came.

Many of these crucial skills depend upon students' ability to acquire new forms of language quickly. Several of the students in our study point out that the English they encounter in school is quite different from that they hear and use in other settings. They refer to it as "academic" English, a language that seems to require additional rules and skills than those necessary for "basic" or "street" English. Sonja describes academic English as "more difficult" for her to learn because she rarely hears it used in other settings.

> Academic English is the most difficult part for me because I did not have an opportunity to hear academic English to talk with that. I thought that I actually understand everything, that I can have communications, that I can speak, that I can understand. I really thought until I came here to Bunker Hill and until I actually heard the other side of English, that academic English. I don't know why but I now divide English. I feel like I don't speak English at all even though I have a huge bond of words but not these words. I knew street English.

Not knowing how to use and understand academic English therefore creates problems for learners, since it is the type of language used in college. As Armand explains,

> So when I came to the United States, I got this problem, because I know basic English, but to learn you know, I need [academic] English.

One feature that characterizes academic English is its vocabulary. In order to understand and demonstrate understanding of psychology, students had to grow familiar with and comfortable using the terminology specific to that field. For many, terms like "homeostasis," "neuroscience," "stimulus," "approach," "random selection," and "variable" were completely unfamiliar and confusing to them. Being able to use such specialized words correctly is an important indication of academic mastery and therefore is a key to moving from their marginalized status to insider status. Students often referred to the difficulties they faced in learning these new words, telling us that in psychology and other classes, there were "a lot of words that you cannot understand" (Armand), "very complicated words" (Marie) and "words I didn't see in my whole life" (Jonas).

> And there is many new words for us to learn. Because maybe there's too much definition. And sometimes you forget the difference between them . . . I can mix them up also. Have to make definition for everything. (Yousef)

Referring to a dictionary didn't always help because "sometimes you don't find what you really wanted to for you to really understand what this means" (Marie). Some students were able to ask their teachers for help in defining vocabulary, especially when difficult terminology interfered with their ability to understand the content of the material they were studying.

> This semester, there were a couple . . . of things that were difficult, but it was probably because of English, just because I don't know so many words. Sometimes, paragraphs that written in academic English, and you have to understand it to understand the rest of it. So I just raise my hand and say, "I'm sorry, I don't understand it." The teacher can say to you another word, and you understand it easily. Probably there were a couple of times I was stuck on one problem. For me it's hard. It's hard because of English, because the words that I don't know. (Natalia)

Students must also learn to communicate their ideas in accepted academic formats. In terms of written communication, the standard format is the five-paragraph essay, including a thesis and supporting evidence. Constructing these types of essays requires students to learn and follow certain rules of thought, writing style, grammar, tone, and vocabulary. Participants describe the importance of learning to "put the words in order" (Minh), to "stick with the idea" (Marie), to "develop the idea" (Abdel), and to use "good grammar . . . correct grammar" (Fei-Wen).

> The essay, I don't know. The essay is difficult. I always got the trouble with that. When they give me a subject, I'm talking about another different subject. I don't know. Sometimes my sentences are not always . . . Sometimes I've got too many faults, vocabulary. I like it, but my problem, I can't get a good grade. That's my problem. (Gilles)

For some classes, students must be able to write the entire essay during class time, to prove that they have not relied too much on help from others.

> I know how to organize the five paragraph essay. It have a topic sentence and something like that. And I try my best to organize. For example, if she give us "What is the more concern about the America in the year 2000?" And I try to find three problems. But it's, the technology in the computer. And the violence. And then I start to write the introduction paragraph and then I create three problems. Wow, it's difficult [to write an essay in class]. I can't think about it. I can't think about a topic in a short time, just 45 minutes. (Minh)

In terms of oral communication, students must also learn that it is acceptable and expected for them to ask questions in order to clarify their understanding. Students may be expected to participate in classroom discussions, to offer their opinions, and engage in debate. Some students relish this new form of learning, but for many, oral participation is very difficult to get used to. They may feel self-conscious about their language skills. Armand realizes that in order to participate in class, he has to be willing to feel a little "frustrated" when he can't always communicate clearly. Sometimes, he thinks

> I don't know if I am able to say this, to say that, to talk to my teacher. I don't know if she will understand me, or if he will understand. You are kind of just shy because you have kind of a pressure. You don't speak in the same way as everybody and they think you are strange.

Ling-Hui reports that she is "just very quiet" in her classes, but that she feels she should change and become more talkative.

> I hope I can talk to the teacher and ask question or answer his question… I never talk in class. I think I should improve this. I don't know because I think my speaking is not good enough so that's why I don't ask.

Like other participants in our study, Ling-Hui grew up in a culture where students are discouraged from asking questions or offering opinions.

> The American system is in the class . . . They give us these class and ask question. But in my country we didn't discuss in the class, just listen, and then we don't have any question. The teacher won't say, "Do you have question?" But here the teacher ask a lot, "Do you have question?" Then people ask question, and we discuss in the class.

Fawzia relates similar reasons for her difficulty in getting used to the class participation behaviors expected of American college students.

> If you have some problem, you know, students can ask teachers, free. It is hard for me to do this. I don't know because in my country, it is hard to talk to the teacher. In my country, you can't ask them, "Teacher, I need help with this. You know, I don't understand." If you need to ask them, you will feel shy. They don't have relation with the student.

Despite their discomfort, students report that they continue to challenge themselves to participate more often. Armand, in particular, tells us that how important these challenges are to him in helping "push himself" to be a "good student" who is open to "new things." At the end of the year, he proudly describes his recent successes in oral participation.

> I was just free to feel myself comfortable in this class. Talk with different accent than other people, but my concern is this class and the content the course. I didn't care about people, what they think. I was just focused on my class.

Familiarity with traditional methods of evaluation, such as quizzes and tests is also necessary for academic success. Students must learn how to prepare for these tests and how to demonstrate their learning effectively. There are also various study methods that they are expected to be able to use, such as note taking, using a textbook effectively, completing homework assignments properly and on time. Minh, Armand, and Ling-Hui each describe specific strategies they have adopted to help them increase their understanding and improve their grades.

> The best way for me to learn is read the chapter before I go to class and then when I come to class I can understand. Because when I read the chapter and there is some point I don't understand, and I come to class the teacher will explain and I understand more the chapter. And then after that, go home and do the homework. We have to do the homework because if you don't do the homework you can (sic) remember and understand the lesson. And when you take the exam, I can do well on the exam. (Minh)
>
> It is important to do your homework, your assignments every time. I mean, do your best to do that, because it seems like you don't do your homework, you are losing a part of the lesson. Maybe one day we start, you'll be like one step back. Because sometimes the next lesson is based on what you did on the homework. So, I think do your homework. Most of the time, it's going to help you to do well on the quiz. (Armand)
>
> I think if I can understand the teacher talking, I have to read the book before the class, and after she, he, the teacher teach I have to do the homework or read the book. (Ling-Hui)

Understanding the function and value of each of these skills, as well as their relationship to each other, can help students learn effectively and demonstrate their understanding to their teachers.

There are also particular behaviors that are emphasized in educational institutions and associated with academic success. One behavior that students mention repeatedly, and that carries great significance in the cultures of their classrooms, is the value of daily attendance and timeliness. According to Yousef, good students "have to get to school on time; no absent." Serge advises other students to "make all your effort to be in class because you have to be in class for the first ten minutes," and Ling-Hui mentions timeliness as an important change in her behavior.

> I think I learned to be on time. I think it's important for me because I used to get later every day, but now I on time every day. I think less, so I not just rush to the class.

According to Xuan, Natalia, and Gabriela, good attendance and promptness can strongly influence their teachers' opinions of them and have a significant effect on their grades.

> Don't be late. Because it is not good to be late because you miss out. You miss out in the beginning of the class. Teachers don't like students coming in late. That shows that that is not a good student. They are not responsible. (Xuan)

> A really good student. Of course this is attendance first. Yes because if I miss one class I got 50 on the test. If I didn't miss a class I got 90. So first of all it is attendance. (Natalia)

> My ESL teacher say, "you have to come to class on time at 8:30 o'clock." If you were in class five minutes late, she'll advise you. She'll say, "You're late. You're late." But also I couldn't understand the message. But at the end of the semester, I understand she's right. She's right because you have to more responsible for your actions. And you have to think what you're going to do. And at the end of the semester, I got an A+. (Gabriela).

Related to the idea of being on time is the idea of managing time. Students must make sure that they can plan a schedule that enables them to meet all of their responsibilities. For many who have demanding work schedules and other obligations, learning how to structure their time is crucial to their success. Gabriela warns other students that "if you're working full time, and you want to be in school full time, think twice. Think twice. Be realistic with your time." After she notices that her demanding schedule is causing her schoolwork and friendships to suffer, she decides she needs to cut back on her work hours.

Minh also pays a great deal of attention to her schedule, carefully planning ahead so that she makes sure to be able to complete all of her homework.

> Sometime I have a lot of work, but I try to arrange the schedule because sometimes I have a lot of homework for my math class, and I have to write the essay, and I have to study for psychology quiz. I have a lot of work. But I try. Like, if I know I have a quiz on Thursday, and I have to do the homework on Wednesday, and I have to do the essay on Thursday too, I start to study on Monday. I planned every day. First of all, I have all the ideas for the essay in mind. Yes. Before I go to the bed, I think about the essay. I have the idea I want to do, which one is the topic sentence, and

> the thesis sentence. And when I try, I already have the idea in mind. Yes. And I begin to do my homework. And then on Tuesday and Wednesday, I'm already free for studying for my psychology quiz. (Minh)

Many students must also adapt to the work ethic that is expected of them in higher education. Marie reports after the first semester that she now realizes, "I can't be playing around. I have to work really hard." Xuan agrees, crediting the combined ESOL/psychology program with teaching her how to become a better college student.

> I feel that this program teach me to get used to study because I never studied before. And once you come to college you have to study, not fool around or anything. It was surprising to me that I actually study. If you don't want to study, you just might as well drop out. In high school, you have to go to school, and some people there, they don't study. They don't care because they take the time fooling around and they don't pay attention.

By the end of the year, Serge feels that he has become a "better student" because he has had to work so hard to overcome "a lot of difficult with the language."

Finally, students must learn how to utilize the institutional resources that exist to help them outside of their classes. Many of the participants in our study rely on the independent learning center, a facility which provides services such as computers and tutoring. Armand briefly summarizes the various types of support the center can provide.

> They give you a program and see if you have some difficulties to do something, they can send you to the self-directed learning center so you can learn. The tutors down there help you to write an essay. They help you to do good in writing. Or if its math, they give you some classes and tests on the computers and things like that. So there is a support from this college. If students don't feel like they're able to do something in the ESL classes, so they help them so they can continue to work.

These writing, studying, organizational, and behavioral skills are the "cultural capital" that at least partially constitute institutional understandings of "good students." In order to succeed academically, to demonstrate fluency in their new roles as students in an American community college, the participants in our study must identify and acquire these skills, adapting their behavior to fit the institutional expectations of them. All learners in our study demonstrate the ability to identify these components of cultural capital, and they commonly organize their descriptions of themselves as learners around them. In fact, some participants in our study define learning almost exclusively as acquiring these types of skills. Others include these skills along with other types of considerations. Examining these constructions of learning through a developmental lens provides a helpful way of understanding some of these differences.

How Participants Construct the Role of Student

For individuals to be able to gain these skills, they must be able to take clear steps toward a goal, follow prescribed rules, and attend to concrete evidence of success and failure. These are all abilities that a person operating with an Instrumental way of understanding can demonstrate. Since all the learners in our study are already evolving out of this benchmark in their development, it is reasonable to expect them to acquire these skills. However, students who operate with Socializing or Self-Authoring ways of understanding demonstrate that they have additional ways of defining and determining concepts of learning and of being a good student. They may orient more toward their inner states, including their feelings and attitudes about learning. Or, they may focus on improving their abilities to express their ideas and live up to their own internal standards.

Many of the learners in our study emphasize the importance of being able to see connections between what they learn in school and their own lives. In fact, students commonly describe their most powerful learning experiences as those that enable them to understand aspects of their own lives in new ways. Their descriptions of the usefulness of their knowledge, however, reflect the structural differences among the learners in our study.

Growing from Instrumental Ways of Understanding

Some students focus almost exclusively on specific behaviors and skills in their descriptions. They tend to define the process of learning in terms of the concrete and literal steps they take to complete an assignment or study for a test, so their descriptions of learning sound like clear directions or rules.

> I have to get to school on time. No absent. I have to spend many time to study, to take care of class. And if I don't know something, I have to ask my teacher. I have to study and to spend time on my class. To go to learning center. Yes. (Yousef)

> Psychology is not easy to study. You have to carry a heavy book. And you have to read a lot of new words, so you have to read first before you come to class. And ESL class can help you a lot for psychology class, so you have to do good in ESL class first. You have to do all the assignments that the teacher give to you. That you can understand the whole lesson first, and then you easy to enter the psychology class. (Minh).

> I can see a student when they are good by taking notes, paying attention, come to school every day, and by their tests and quiz grades. (Xuan)

Similarly, these students are more apt to define their standards and goals for learning in very concrete terms. They explain that these behaviors are the key to success, suggesting that there is a direct cause and effect relationship. For example, Yousef claims, "If we spend some time and we study much, there will be no difficulty," and Gilles suggests that "If you're steady, you're going to pass."

They are more likely to evaluate their learning based on the grades and course credit they receive and according to their ability to identify and produce the "right" answer. Because they do not question what can be termed "right" or "wrong," these students often do not explain how right answers are determined or who determines them.

> I could put more time on reading it, and answer the question right because whenever I get stuck on something, I write anything down, and I don't have a good grade for that. (Xuan)

> [I know when I've learned something new because] it's like if you learn about something and then, first thing like you learn a lot. And when you be asked some questions and some of them you didn't know, and you went back to get more information basically like after that, you get more information. After that, you will be more familiar with what did you study, and that's helped a lot, and the way you get the information and then you have more information about the subject that you study. (Abdel)

> [You know when you've learned] if you test yourself by asking yourself some questions about the subject. And if you answer correctly most of them, then it suggests to you that you learned a lot. (Abdel)

Movement toward these goals involves learning better skills or more carefully following the concrete steps they have identified as important to success. These students evaluate their own and others' behaviors mainly in terms of whether or not they lead to immediate and desirable consequences.

In describing how they apply their learning to their lives, those with some remaining Instrumental ways of understanding were more likely to describe useful factual knowledge as that which does not need to be interpreted or adapted when applying it to a particular situation. In class, Minh has learned how to tell if a person is right-brained or left-brained by comparing a person's hands.

> When I study psychology and I know people have a right brain. I mean they're not very strong about the logical, something like that. And people have a left brain. And they can strong in mathematics. And I study from my professor that if you put the hand like that, you can know which brain is stronger for people.

Minh, like other Instrumental learners, also determines whether or not knowledge is useful based on whether it helps her to make better decisions involving concrete concerns.

> And then from my accounting class my professor said you better use a MasterCard and Visa card than American Express or the Discover Card. And I don't know, yes . . . It's very useful in my life.

As these students emphasize the concrete consequences or results of their new knowledge, they can judge the value of their knowledge by the quality of the results. For Gilles, for example, what seems most important to him is not that he achieve a powerful sense of connection with his friends, but that the end product of his behavior and their conversation is a good one.

> When I go out with my friends, I know how to talk with them. I know how to get results and do something good. I don't want them to be mad at me.

He does express concern that his friends will not be "mad" at him, which could illustrate some of his more Socializing abilities. However, it is also possible that he understands and orients to someone else's anger more because of the effect it will have on him than because there is a break in the mutuality of the relationship or because he can understand his friend's perspective.

While individuals operating with an Instrumental way of understanding possess the abilities necessary to acquire the cultural capital of successful students, they could encounter some difficulties. As long as the means of attaining the desired skills and behaviors is clearly identified and described for them, they can focus on these tasks. Yet if these specific skills and behaviors are not made explicit, and the learners must infer them from the cultural surround, an Instrumental way of understanding is not sufficient. In order to deduce these rules, individuals must first be able to see that there are multiple perspectives on any given issue, to take the perspective of the institution or authorities within the institution. They must try and see the world the way these others see and value it. This ability to reason abstractly, and to infer concrete messages from a general perspective requires a Socializing way of understanding.

The learners in our study who have not yet fully developed this way of understanding may encounter difficulties attaining specific skills which have not been identified for them and which they are unable to identify on their own. In the classroom, a student who does not understand the culturally sanctioned and expected behaviors might try and "cover" their lack of understanding by remaining quiet, withdrawn, and passive, unable to complete the required tasks correctly. This student could also appear to be resisting learning by unknowingly acting in ways which transgress the rules of the dominant culture.

Instrumental learners also have difficulty in thinking about and expressing abstract ideas or the logical relations among ideas. They may therefore have difficulty with assignments that require them to orient to their own or others' inner states. Yousef, who is transitioning between Instrumental and Socializing learning tells us that the writing assignments which he finds difficult are the ones that require him to write about his feelings and attitudes. The more concrete topics like sports are easier for him.

> We write many essay. Sometimes she give us writing out of psychology. We write what is a famous person or what is the important thing in your life like this. Some very hard to write sometimes if you write how like "openness" or like "language," like how you feel about doing, how this importance our life. But when you can write about the sport, you can write. Yeah, this is easy I think, easy enough. Yeah, write in class about this was nice.

Instrumental learners' limitations could become risks if the behaviors and skills they rely on to achieve their desired goals are insufficient to the tasks they are assigned. As long as they can demonstrate learning through following clear and concrete instructions and rules, they can succeed. But if higher-level tasks are required, these learners may not possess the cognitive complexity to perform these tasks without significant levels of external support.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

For other students in our study, attention to specific skills and behaviors of cultural capital was combined with increased attention to a more abstract sense of the importance of attitude. Their descriptions of good students and effective learning include references to maintaining a "positive" attitude, feeling "strong," remaining "curious," "open," "flexible," and "humble" in the face of new experiences and challenges. These qualities suggest that the students have a growing awareness of their own inner states and emotions and also indicate an increased ability to reflect on themselves in a more abstract way. Other important attitudes and traits these students value include having a "hope," a "will to learn," determination and belief in one's own abilities. Minh demonstrates her increasing capacity to think about and talk about abstract qualities in her own inner life.

> I think to be a very good student, I would say had to be, have intelligence. But I don't think so. I think to be a good student you have to be curious, and study hard, and come to class. I think that. I always think so. Because intelligent is the trait but somebody don't have. I mean that they don't be intelligent, but they try. They try their best. And they want to study. And they try to find something new. Or they try their best. I think it's a good student.
>
> I think that hope help the students improve the study. And hope help you learn feel stronger, feel recover from illness. And hope to people work hard. Hope is a motivation that help people work hard, like that. Yes. I think if we have a high hope, we can more success. And if we don't get what we want, then we change our hope, and we wait.

Considerations of one's character and personality are therefore seen as driving behavior. These students are also able to acknowledge different ways of learning, which may explain why being "open" and "flexible" are considered important. Thus, these students may have identified their preferred learning styles and strategies which allow them to generalize across specific tasks. They can make distinctions between the skills called for in specific situations and their own preferred ways of learning. Natalia learns best when she is able to make explicit connections between new knowledge and what she already knows. She describes how this style of learning, which she originally identified while still a student in her native country, is one that she can generalize and apply to her psychology class.

> Actually I learn anything with analogy. So when I learn something I try to think of something that is remind me. A word that's similar to [a word in my native language], that I translate and put it together in one folder. So for example, there is an neuron that we just talk about. It remind me something. For example, it remind me of caterpillar. Yeah, both long and thin. But when I said caterpillar I tried to already remember neuron. I said, "Caterpillar, neuron, neuron. What is it? Neuron. Caterpillar. Yes, of course, it's long." And already I'm trying to remember. I said it's neuron, and already I saw the picture of neuron. Just analogically, I try to remember everything. For me it's easy to learn.

Accordingly, these students tend to refer to their attitudes and their personality when they describe how they evaluate their learning. While these attitudes are seen as driving learning, the students do not seem able to separate their attitudes from their learning. The openness and receptivity they describe suggests a kind of assumed and necessary agreement with or acceptance of new material. They can evaluate their learning in terms of their ability to achieve this sense of acceptance and inclusion. Here, Armand emphasizes the importance of remaining "open," "flexible" in order to "work according to the regular system."

> The teacher is going to make an effort to let you understand that you have to explain everything in English and try to work according to the regular system, but as long as you are stuck in your culture, you don't perform this way. You are not going to go forward, so you stay somewhere. I think that's the thing most of the students have when they start as international students in a college. If they are open, the more they are open, they learn new things. Because we saw that in psychology. The openness is when people understand that they have to learn new things, trying to get something new, novel experiences. If you are not open to learn, to make yourself learning something, even if you think you know something, if you are not able to be flexible with yourself, to admit that, "uh huh, I have to do this," no matter how old you are, or what your background, whatever, if you don't understand this, that you have to be open, it seems like you are going to waste your time. It is going to be tough for you to get done your first semester in college.

Natalia describes a "voice from inside" that tell her when she's "got it."

> [I know when I've learned something because] it's in myself that said to me, "Yes, you have got it, you understand what does he mean." I got it. I have the picture that connects with the words, and it connects with the sounds and everything. So this give to me, "Yeah, you got it." The words and sound. We call this the voice from inside, something like that say to you, "You got it honey, that's it."

In describing important changes they have undertaken, these students refer to changes in their attitudes, to new awareness of their inner states, and to abstract understandings of subject matter. These changes may be signaled by the appearance of a new learning context that allows students to function in new ways, discovering a new sense of themselves that cannot exist apart from that context. Such is the case for Armand.

> Sometimes I discover myself when I am talking. I am not the kind of person staying quiet and try to figure out what I am. No. I may get information about myself, and it is not easy to understand what I am, but if somebody ask me question, or if in any circumstance I had to talk to anybody, and I start explaining something, I start now explaining that, and I discover myself while I am talking, who I am. So it's kind of explaining to myself my personality, but if somebody does not ask me, it is true that I will not discover many things that I have.

Speaking about how they apply their learning to their lives, students who fully possess a Socializing way of understanding describe how their new knowledge helps them to take the perspective of someone else, to understand people's internal states in new ways. They also show more ability to determine when their new knowledge is appropriate to a situation, to recognize its applicability even though the specific circumstances may be quite different from those that they studied in their classes. Armand remembers how some of the concepts he learned in Psychology helped him understand the behavior of people at his workplace.

> Yes, like the psychoanalytical approach. This definition helped me to know how people sometimes get stressed in this country, like in work, they are just always like, do well, well, well. So sometimes they do as much as they can. So, it's kind of an emotional fears. They've got unconscious fears. Sometimes they realize they don't do well. You know, if somebody is working somewhere, and his supervisor behind him, or manager is watching him and sometimes, you've just got to get the managers. That is a mistake. So, I'd be like, "Oh, no, I don't want to do a mistake." And when he got about five, ten years after same job, you know, he's starting to get tired of the job. So, he needs now to understand the part of unconscious, his mental process, so he can understand how to help himself to overcome that. Because when you let yourself be fascinated with that, you are going to be like crazy or sick because you like to do well every time.

These learners also speak more often about the ways that they can apply their learning to their own feelings and sense of self. They speak about learning in order to "grow my feelings" (Jonas); "to know who I am" (Armand).

Growing into Self-Authoring Learners

A third group of students in our study use slightly different criteria for thinking about themselves as students and the processes of their learning. While they, like the other students, refer to the importance of adopting specific behaviors and attitudes toward their work, they also are beginning to articulate a new sense of priorities in expressing the complexity of their ideas. These students seem to focus also on communicating ideas and opinions that exist independently of the context in which they are engaged. As Serge and Fei-Wen illustrate, the language they use to describe their ideas suggests that they think of their ideas as containing multiple layers of meaning, and these students are more likely to feel challenged to find ways to express this multifaceted nature of their thoughts.

> And when writing the essay, I mean you really understand the subject, but you cannot really express yourself because you don't have enough vocabulary, the way

> that you want to say that, you know. Sometimes that's my problem. Sometimes I'm trying to make something clear. (Serge)
>
> I can use the English writing to express my thought, my feeling. For example, now I don't feel very difficult to express what I want to say in paper. I think maybe my sentence is not beautiful, but I can express my meaning clearly. Because I live here, I must know how to write English sentence, how to write English essay. I think that is life cure for me. At least I think if I used the dictionary, I can write something. I can express my thought. Recently our speaking class give me a topic. At 11:00, I have a final examination in speaking. I will talk my topic. Because I learn a lot of writing skills so I can write myself essay. Because I write it, I have a deeply impression that I can talk it. So writing help me talk, you know. (Fei-Wen)

These students therefore show more interest in holding themselves to a standard of how well they are able to express their thoughts than to being validated by others. They place a greater emphasis on whether or not they have met their internal standards than they do to looking to an external source of authority for approval. For example, in Sonja's eyes, a good student is one who:

> . . . knows what he wants and if he really wants it. Realizing that you really want that. I don't do anything in my life that I don't like. Sometimes you have to do something. I know that but if I have to study something that I don't find interesting, I don't have success in that because that gives it like for three or four hours. Let's say the computers. I know computers are very important here, and that's a very good career, easy money and everything. You have a big salary but I just don't like it and so then I have to choose between these too. My friends and my family are like, "you should take computers." But I did not want to take it because I know if I took that then I would not have success as much as I have in psychology because I really like it. And I think that if you really want something, and if you really like something, you have determination I think. You have to know what you want, how much that is really important to you. Because if you know that that's really important to you, you are ready to give up a lot of other things. If you are there just because you should be, you think "I should be." So it all depends on what you think about it.

As with Socializing learners, students who are developing Self-Authorship show increased ability to interpret and anticipate their teachers' standards about what constitutes good learning. They can infer from a teacher's behavior what that teacher values in students. However, these learners, unlike the Socializing learner, can see that these different opinions are not necessarily conflicting notions of truth. They represent multiple perspectives and possibilities which all can be seen as viable ways of teaching. For example. when she begins studying with a professor Sonja reasons that it is useful to figure out what types of behaviors and demonstrations of knowledge are important to this professor.

> I had both of the classes same professor. So also, for me the way to learn is to know what teacher wants. What kind of professor I have. What is his way of working? Because each professor has different style. Like I'm first assignment that I give to him and I look at my grades. And then I look why does he emphasize my mistakes. Next time I focus on that more than something else. And if that works, if next assignment is better grade than the previous one, I stick with that. If it's not that I'm looking what he is, like some professor, like my math professor, she pays too much attention how often I am in the class. Are you late and stuff like that. So when I realized that I was trying to be there all the time because at the end she pays a close attention to your assignment. But she also grades you on that and if you were there most of the time. And even if you are not doing so well, she's ready to like push you a little bit. But she's very upset if you don't come to her class. Or if you are like there just physically, not mentally. If you're not being 100 percent of attention. So when I realized that, I was trying to do it like that. And with English I didn't have to pay attention because I realized I can do it what she want me to do. Just write essay and that's it.

Relying more on their sense of their internally authored goals, these students show signs of evaluating their teachers and classes in terms of how well they meet these goals. This increasing capacity for self-dependence and self-ownership allows them to step away from their immediate context and determine if it meets their own standards for learning.

The learners who speak most freely and in depth about the ways they apply classroom learning to their own lives are those students who are developing Self-Authoring abilities. Perhaps one reason that they emphasize these kinds of learning is that they have achieved the ability to take more distance on their own emotional states. They are therefore better able to articulate differences within themselves, since a more integrated self exists that can describe changes to its various parts. Since these learners describe many examples of useful and exciting learning experiences, we include two particularly compelling examples here. In the first example, Benetta describes herself as growing less shy and more open, friendly, and comfortable with other people. She attributes these changes to the ways that she has learned from her psychology class, in that as she studied various aspects of personality and reasons why people have certain personality traits, she was able to identify aspects of herself that she wanted to change.

> I was confused about how I act sometimes. And now I know, okay, that's because the psychology teacher says this, I read the book and it's more clear for me. Now I

> know why I am shy. I'm so shy. And now I know the reason. I think that is because my parents—hereditary. My father is like that. And now I say, okay, I'm shy because my father is like that. It's more clear. [And now] I feel more comfortable talking to people. Before, I couldn't speak with you, like look in your eyes directly. I only like with my head down. And now I can do it. I can see you directly, and I feel comfortable talking to you.
>
> I don't know at what point I changed, but it was in psychology class. Something happened this semester. I can't explain to you exactly how it just happened because it just changed. I didn't know how. I didn't know how. Every time that I read a chapter, I say okay, maybe that is one of my problems. I'm going to change this. I went to the next chapter and I would say, "Okay, I have to change this myself." This was a big change for me. My personality, everything. Now my work, I'm talking with everybody. I'm saying, "Oh hi, how are you doing?" And I'm making a conversation with everybody, all my co-workers. And here, I have more friends in college. Before I was only alone and just, I came to class, different classes. I went to the learning center, do my homework, and go home. I went to work. I did my work. Never talked to nobody. Now I spend more time with people. I'm talking. Now I have more friends. I think it's a big improvement for myself.
>
> I say how I change like that? That personality that I had before, and now I'm more open. I think that is the word. I'm open now. More friendly. I have more communication with others. That's good because they say, "Okay, she's a nice person."

In telling this story, Benetta seems to take some responsibility for making these changes in her life. She seems able, therefore to review and critique her own actions and aspects of her personality based on a Self-Authored theory about how she would prefer to be. Rather than accepting that she must be shy because she inherited that trait, she is able to make that decision for herself.

There is also evidence that Benetta continues to use a Socializing way of understanding herself and her experiences. Even though she mentions that she purposefully wanted to change, she still cannot really describe how this change came about, how the various factors in her life were involved. This difficulty may reflect the authority that her external environment has for her. She does not completely possess the ability to separate her ideas and feelings from those around her, to see them as something she can regulate and control from within. An increased ability to do these things might enable her to step away from the parts of herself that have changed and describe the process of change more clearly.

Serge, another student in the program, describes a similar change experience that he had. In his story, his increased ability to understand people enables him to change his emotional reactions. He grows less angry, better able to understand himself and to tolerate other people.

> You know something, when people say something to me I usually get, even I don't show you that I'm angry, but I'm angry inside. Now it's like there's not anything that make me angry. You can say anything you want, and I'm just looking at you, and that's all. If I see something that's going to make a big fight, I'm going to go. You know, it's a lot of thing that's changed. So now I am less angry and mean. No, less emotional about the things that's not going to help me. If you say something to me like, instead of fighting or instead of saying bad words to you, I just let you go, and go my way.
>
> I think the learning is, like they say the language, is really good thing for human to experience. And when you're learning those things, you behave in a new way. You understand yourself in another way. And then you see the world, and then you understand the world another way, in your own way. And now I know how to tolerate people. I know how to understand and know everybody. Because everybody behave in that way, in their own way, in their own world. And I have to be in my own world and have my own world. And I have to tolerate and understand the value of everybody.
>
> We learned the social learning. We learned a lot of things about people, about, you know, a lot of things that we have inside and we don't know. And then maybe by studying psychology, we understand the things that we have that needs to be changed but that needs to be shaped again.

In this story, Serge explains that his change is not just one of learning to control his anger, but in fact, he has changed the way he understands people so that he doesn't even become angry at all. This kind of change suggests, perhaps, that Serge has experienced a transformation in his way of interpreting other people's behavior. His emphasis on having his "own world" and everyone else having "their own world" may indicate that Serge is less identified with the thoughts and feelings of others than previously. Growing less dependent on maintaining a sense of inclusion and mutuality with others, Serge is also less controlled by them and their behavior. His increased Self-Authorship enables him to understand others better because he is not threatened by their difference. They can behave "in their own way, in their own world" without threatening his world.

Thus, as long as their developmental capacity to construct conceptions of a "good student" loosely matches the demands placed on them by their institution, all participants in our study demonstrate some capacity for identifying and acquiring the cultural capital necessary to succeed as American community college students. In situations where the institution requires students to operate with Socializing or Self-Authoring ways of understanding, requiring abstract or independent reasoning, some students may need additional types of support to help them develop these capacities. Many of our students do face these demands as they encounter ways that American culture and its institutions expose them to messages that devalue their own backgrounds, values, experiences, and cultural characteristics.

Marginalization: Messages of Inequality

As the students in our study attempt to acquire the skills necessary to succeed as college students, they are faced with the racial, class-based, cultural, and linguistic inequalities of American culture. In addition to possessing the ability to acquire the skills and behavior that constitute cultural capital, students may therefore need to possess additional abilities. In order to construct a conscious and creative response to potentially toxic messages about their own cultural identity, students may need to identify, interpret, and evaluate the implicit messages that accompany their Socialization process.

Sociologist Awad Ibrahim (1999) argues that in a racially conscious society such as the U.S., new immigrants are categorized according to the existing racial divisions. For example, a Vietnamese student living in Vietnam might not think of herself as "Asian" in the sense of being "other" or "minority." However, when she moves to the United States, she would be exposed to new messages about her racial identity, messages which could cause her to think differently about her race. Having moved from Africa to North America, Ibrahim remembers his own changing awareness of his racial identity.

> As a continental African, I was not considered Black in Africa; other terms served to patch together my identity, such as *tall*, *Sudanese*, and *basketball player*. However, as a refugee in North America, my perception of self was altered in direct response to the social processes of racism and the historical representation of Blackness whereby the antecedent signifiers became secondary to my Blackness, and I retranslated myself: I became Black. (p. 354, emphasis in original)

According to American racial categories, 15 of 17 participants in our study are members of minority groups, and they will therefore be culturally recognized and marginalized as Black or Asian or Latino. These predetermined categories tend to erase differences and complexities of cultures, personalities, and languages and send powerful messages to students about the identities they should construct for themselves.

Noticing the ways that racial categories and associations are imposed on students, one of the teachers in the program, Carol, describes how some accept the identities offered to them by U.S. culture, even when those identities are unrelated to their own experiences. In her view, some students are Socialized into an identity of resistance and opposition and take on these identities and the behaviors associated with them.

> You know that there's a kind of a funny thing. Some of these kids are very well educated. They come from [a country in the Caribbean], and they come here and they identify with sort of the American Black thing and the kind of tough guy in the school and the bad attitude, and I'm not trying to say all, but suddenly they relate to kind of this minority status, hostile, you know, minority, entrenched minority kind of thing that has been the African American experience here but not really theirs. I mean, it's just they come here and they say, "Okay, the rules are different." And they relate mostly to their peers and not their parents who are going through their own difficulties with coming here, if they even came, and so you tend to see that, you know, with some of the students [from a Caribbean country]. And when you really dig a little bit, you see that actually a lot of them are quite educated and came from middle or upper class backgrounds when they were there, and that the affectations that they've taken on here are just that.

Carol's comments seem to suggest that the students take on these identities somewhat unconsciously, since the students' new identities are unrelated to their past experiences. Ibrahim (1999) makes a similar argument, noting that

> the Western hegemonic representations of Blackness . . . are negative and tend to work alongside historical and subconscious memories that facilitate their interpretations by members of the dominant groups. Once African youths encounter these negative representations, they look for Black cultural and representation forms as sites for positive identity formation and identification (Kelly, 1998). An important aspect of identification is that it works over a period of time and at the subconscious level. (Ibrahim, p. 360)

In further explanation, Carol mentions that when exposed to different cultural messages and expectations which invite students to shed their new "African American" identities, some "really come around," implying that they adopt identities more relevant to their own experiences.

Some students in our study recognize that others may judge them according to racial prejudices. For example, Ling-Hui describes her plans to transfer at the end of the first semester to another community college in the area. She worries about how the American students there perceive Asian students. Her comments indicate that she reads certain messages in the culture around her that value some racial identities more highly than others.

> I hoped the classmates there are like here, but they are more American. Here are more international student so I think that's the difference. I have to get used to be with more Americans. Now, I don't have American classmates so I just worry if I start there, maybe I can't adapt in the class because we will divide in groups. Maybe Americans they don't want to be in group with Asian. They think maybe our image is not good. So I was very worried.
>
> In my math class, they don't talk to me and I don't talk to them, to Americans. We don't talk a lot each other. Sometimes we have take-home tests. I go to library with classmates to study, so it's like an American group and Asian group separate. Sometimes maybe we have a project in class to have two or three people to do one project. How can I find a partner? I think it is difficult to do it. I have heard that some Asian students don't want to choose a course where there are no other Asian, only him or her. I feel maybe uncomfortable, worried too.

While Ling-Hui notices that these messages exist around her, it is not clear from her comments whether she accepts or rejects these messages. It is possible that she can construct a positive response to this situation; however, her feelings of being "uncomfortable" and "worried" may indicate that she allows these messages to define her in negative ways.

The learners in our study are also learning English as a second language, another aspect of their identity which traditionally connotes "outsider" status in the U.S. (Lin, 1999; Norton, 1997; Pennycook, 1999). As ESOL students at BHCC, they are placed within the lower tracks of the institutional hierarchy. They are classified as needing remediation and are not yet eligible for college credit. This placement can also carry a certain social stigma. It classifies them as "foreign," different from the American students who "own" the language and the institution. Such a viewpoint illustrates the "abstracted notion of an idealized speaker of English from which ethnic and linguistic minorities are automatically excluded" (Leung, Harris & Rampton in Norton, 1997). As non-native English speakers, these students must improve their English as a necessary first step toward achieving academic recognition as well as higher social standing within the institution.

Some participants are aware of the low social and academic value placed on being in ESOL classes. They distinguish these classes from the "real" or "normal" classes, for which students can earn credits. Ling-Hui's comments illustrate the difference in status between these two programs. Her fear is that once she has left the program, she may not be able to handle this coursework without the ESOL support.

> I enrolled in this program just because I have to study ESL 3. But I also want to take another course, like normal course. I don't want just that English. So I choose psychology. But I also worry that after the ESL, if I study another major maybe I can't understand, without all the ESL help. I don't know. I just worry.
>
> Actually my family and friends don't want me to take the ESL class. They want me take normal class like I can choose a major. So maybe they think it's easy or because it's just English class, so I just take one psychology. But I think it's good begin for me.

What is not clear from these comments is whether Ling-Hui has internalized these beliefs, accepted the fact that the ESOL classes are "easy" and deservedly lower in status than other courses.

When someone criticizes Natalia's ability to speak English, she experiences these criticisms as making her feel like she has a disability, like there is something literally harming her, "cutting" her.

> But to learn something in different language, like science or even grammar, just simple grammar, it's hard, it's really hard. So sometimes when I am talking to somebody and people say, "Oh you don't speak well, blah, blah, blah" and say something like not really good. I was like, "I'm sorry." And I feel like I have a disability, I have like, I have something that like, cutting myself, don't say anymore. If somebody said it about me, I believe it. I don't know why, I do. I just do this.

Other students describe differences between ESOL students and American students as differences of culture. Having come from other countries, these students feel separate from the American students. Many do not like feeling separate and different, describing it as feeling "strange" or "scary."

> Well, American students are different than international students. The international students came from different cultures and understood each other. The American culture is different. So we share the same thinking about American culture, that it's different than we came from. So that makes us to connect and to relate to each other. We have the same feelings. So when you go to other classes, we don't have

> that. You feel like you are there the minority, and here is you are now a majority, all of us internationals who don't speak the same language, but we connect. When you go there, you feel like minority, and something doesn't connect there. I guess we feel strange in this country. (Abdel)
>
> This semester is much harder because I don't know anybody in the class. It was much harder, most of them were Americans. So it was real hard. It was really scary. (Natalia)

Despite the fact that these students come from a variety of cultures, their comments suggest that in this community college, the differences among foreign cultures are less important than the differences between Americans and foreigners. Abdel's description emphasizes that the most important similarity among them is that they are all different from Americans. This fact alone enables the students to "connect" and have "the same feelings." It also exposes them to feeling inadequate, strange, scared, and alone.

Financial barriers also threaten their success. Out of economic necessity, most of the participants in our study must work long hours which limits the amount of coursework they can take and the hours they can study. Jobs and affordable housing are difficult to find, and some face the additional pressures of supporting other family members. Finally, few can afford to purchase resources such as computers and extra books to help them study. Many of the students in our study recognize and discuss the importance of money and education in U.S. society. However, no student presents a critique of these values. Instead, some, such as Marie, seem to accept them as indications of an individual's inherent worth as a person.

> Because, especially in this society we are living in now, if a person is rich, they have money. I mean, you might have little respect because you have money. You know, money is everything. But if you don't, especially if you are not an American native and you from another country, you have nothing. I mean, they not going to look at you as nothing. That's the way I see it. And it is true.
>
> But I mean, when my cousin is talking, like, she always tell me, you know, if you still want to be my friend, you got to go to school because there is no one going to take you the way you are. It is true. If you don't have any education, they don't want you. I mean, a lot of people, if you don't have anything, they don't want you. It's true. Especially if the person already has something. They not going to waste their time on someone like you. I mean, she always tell me good things, and she didn't have her mother. She was alone, and she made a new life.

The students in our study therefore experience significant obstacles to their continued success as students. However, since all individuals possess agency, the ability to act in numerous and creative ways, they can conceive of and engage in this task in several ways. In this chapter, we show two different dominant types of responses that the students in our study demonstrate. However, we do not wish to suggest that these are the *only* two ways that they respond, nor that any individual student responds in *only one* way. In fact, a student's response to any given situation may depend on many different factors such as the situation itself, the larger context in which it occurs, sources of support in the student's life, as well as the student's own beliefs and internal resources. We also see developmental capacity as one important factor, and in the following section, we illustrate the ways that it might differentiate among the ways that students respond to cultural messages of inequality.

How Students Construct Messages of Inequality

One way students can respond is by internalizing the values of the dominant culture. Following this course of action might lead students to denigrate aspects of their identity and culture which conflict with or are not rewarded by the dominant culture. In compliance with myths of social mobility, they may accept the idea that cultural capital is equally available to all who are determined and hardworking. As they encounter personal and institutional discrimination, they run the risk of bitter discouragement and frustration (Valadez, 1999). We see indications that some of our students may be at risk for this type of reaction.

Another way that students exercise agency is by resisting the dominant culture and developing an oppositional culture which challenges it (Shaw, 1999; Goto, 1999; Valadez, 1999). Students who resist the ideology of academic achievement might refuse to accept the authority of their teachers, or refuse to follow institutional norms and rules that they experience as harmful to them. To follow this path might place them at odds with institutional values in ways that jeopardize their chances of acquiring the cultural capital they need to succeed. However, students who are able to resist the dominant culture might also develop important abilities to shield themselves from toxic messages about their own cultural identities. Some students in our study demonstrate an ability to resist these messages and evaluate themselves according to their own internally constructed standards and values. We contend that the reason these students demonstrate these abilities is that they have begun moving away from Socializing ways of understanding and towards Self-Authoring ways of understanding.

Growing From Instrumental Ways of Understanding

The students in our study who operate primarily with Instrumental understandings orient toward explicit relationships of power and inequality in their lives or in the environment around them. Because they focus on the concrete rules and procedures of institutions and relationships, Instrumental students do not call these rules into question on behalf of larger, more abstract purposes. For example, Yousef recognizes that money affords some students increased access to education, to better jobs, to a greater number and quality of material possessions.

> They give financial aid, but some rule is very hard, if you take one class, no financial aid, you have to take two classes. If you take one class, you lost financial aid. I'm driving taxi. Twelve hours a day. Then I study. But now I have to drop some hours. Less hours. I work six hours. But need to spend many time studying. Now, I have to take time from school. I have to spend time here in school. You know, I have to spend time learning.
>
> I have computer course, but it very hard. I should have computer in my home. Because, I drop this class because I don't have computer in my home. But now I bought one. Because every day homework, I have to send it by e-mail. To the teacher or I have to spend three hours here learning something to do the homework . . . But now I bought one computer, I take in the fall.
>
> I have to finish this school, it's two years. Because you can get degree from here, and you work after. The degree is important because you'll get more raise. You'll get good job somewhere, in two years maybe. But when you get four years, maybe you'll get diploma or something. You'll get good money.

Having identified the college's rules for providing financial aid and enumerating the concrete privileges that money can buy, Yousef does not call these rules into question on behalf of larger principles such as justice or fairness. Instead, he focuses mainly on following the steps and rules necessary to acquire the money and possessions he needs and desires.

Instrumental learners may also identify their teachers as holders of power. When they evaluate their teachers' use of power in relation to them, these learners tend to focus on whether or not the teachers help them meet their own concrete needs and goals. Xuan and Gilles both illustrate these ways of assessing teachers. They also explain their understanding of teachers' abuse or misuse of power—presenting subject matter in ways that make it difficult for students to understand.

> The way my psychology teacher teaches, I understand the words; but, back in high school, the way my teacher teach, I don't really get. Like there is no key words. The book that we have right now, there is a blue word for the definition. That's how I understand. That's easier. Yes. (Xuan).

> I don't know about a good teacher. You can tell who is a good teacher by the way they explain, they way they go through the homework, or maybe how they can do the class to be more easy for us. Some teachers, they don't do that. They just bent on their way. On their own way. Yes, some teachers, try to say what would make the class easy. Some teachers try to say that. Some, they don't. Yes, that is an important thing. The student, maybe they find it, this is the easy way, they can know about it, so. (Gilles)

Focused mainly on the ways that teachers do or do not help them meet their own concrete goals, Instrumental learners do not recognize messages of power and inequality that are not stated to them in explicit terms. Thus, these learners do not describe the more abstract or implicit power dynamics of the institution.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

In contrast, Socializing learners can identify more abstract messages of cultural expectations and standards. The danger for these learners is that evaluations of their learning, and their sense of their own acceptability cannot exist independent of the contexts and authorities in which they are embedded. These students have not constructed an independent sense of their own standards that they can consult to determine whether or not these evaluations are justified. They may often work hard in order to receive the approval that is necessary to their sense of well-being, but negative evaluations from authorities are likely to be unquestioningly internalized. In such situations, the negative feedback may be interpreted to be a negative evaluation of the student's self, rather than simply a negative evaluation of the student's behavior or work.

For example, when someone tells Natalia that she doesn't speak English well, she experiences these comments as violent attacks, like there is something "cutting herself." She explains that she always believes the criticisms others have of her, that she "cannot stop" listening to them.

> I'm always listen what the teacher said, when people said about me. Always listen. I can't stop. Even my mom said to me that I'm really bad, I do bad things, I will try to not do the thing, just don't do this because I'm really bad in it. I'm like, you know, if somebody said it about me, I believe it. I don't know why, I do. I just do this. I'm really, sometimes it's really bad, sometimes it's really good.
>
> People said to me sometimes, "You're a really bad girl. You didn't do that. You didn't do that." I'm like feel, "Oh yes, I didn't do that. I didn't do. I'm a really bad girl." And I'm just close myself, and I don't want to talk. I don't want to see. I

> don't want to. I'm just closing, and I go somewhere to be alone to discuss it with myself. "Yes, you didn't do. You have to do that. You have to do that." And later when I do next time, I'll try to do everything right, and when people say to me that I'm still do this bad thing, I'm escaping it and I'm closing. It's like bad for me because I'm closed myself and I can't open my, like really just escape it. It was really often times.

If faced with negative appraisals from important others, Socializing learners such as Natalia run the risk of internalizing negative images of their own abilities.

However, these students may have some protection from negative messages if they have sufficient sources of positive support in other parts of their lives. For example, in the second semester of her coursework, Minh struggled in her English class. The teacher required that students write their essays during class time only. Minh was unable to prepare for these essays at home and often had a great deal of difficulty writing well in such limited periods of time. Dissatisfied with her grades, she grew very upset.

> I talk to my boyfriend a lot. Every time I got a bad grade, I am so sad. I can't live. I can't live. I don't know why but my friend said, "It's not the last day. You can continue, continue, continue. Don't be sad." But every time I got the bad grade I think "oh yes." I feel so sad every time I got the bad grade. [And then] I talk to my friend. I talk to my boyfriend. They encourage me. "You did try your best. You have to satisfy what you did. You try your best. Don't be sad."
>
> [I worry] less now because I think they right. They said that. "You try your best and you have to satisfy what you did. Don't be sad." And I have to think of future. I have to study for the future. Don't think about this. Because I cannot change what happened. Yes. So I have to try on the next step.

While Minh's experience causes her a great deal of strain and anxiety, the support she receives from important friends in her life enable her to "worry less" and to avoid thinking about the bad experience.

Natalia also receives support from other teachers she has. She describes her best teachers as those who "love the students" and "respect" them. She can recognize these teachers because, as she says, "I will feel it. It is inside me." For example, the extra time and attention that Natalia's biology teacher shows her enables her to feel much more positive about her own abilities as a learner.

> When I ask him that I want to do extra work because I really like it he said, "Okay, come on Fridays. It is yours." He give a fetal pig to work on. He gives me the

> brain of sheep, heart of sheep. He give to me to do anything I wanted to do with cells and microscopes, the plant cells and for the smallest organisms. So it is amazing. He is giving the chance. He is giving chances as he can do it. And up to that he knows that I work hard. I show to him all the stuff I did. For example my last work was work with corn, you know, like Indian corn, the different colors. I was trying to get the gene type of it. And it was interesting. He gave me the chance to do it. He said, "You know what? You did a really good job." He explained to me what I did wrong and what I did right. It is not his work, but he did it. This was really good. This was one of the most exciting things I ever did during this semester of school.

It seems particularly important for Socializing learners such as Natalia to work with teachers who can affirm and encourage students' sense of hope and confidence in their own abilities. For these students, who make up the majority of the learners in our study, it is crucial that they find enough of these sources of support, either in the college itself or in other parts of their lives.

Growing Toward Self-Authoring Ways of Understanding

Self-Authoring students seem better able to evaluate and critique the messages they receive about race, class, linguistic, and cultural differences. As they move away from Socializing ways of understanding, they develop the ability to reflect on the standards and values of their cultural surround, reviewing them according to their own internal standards and values. Thus, even if the culture messages imply their inferiority, they are able to reject these messages and disregard negative feedback that contradicts their own values and standards.

In the first semester of the program, one of Marie's teachers suggests that she may not be sufficiently prepared to pass her class. Rather than accepting and internalizing this opinion of her abilities, Marie relies on developing her internal sense of authority to guide her. She is able to disagree respectfully with her teacher's assessment and maintain confidence in her own theories about her abilities. She convinces the teacher that she will be able to learn the material successfully.

> [My teacher] is the one that told me, "I don't think you are going to be able to make it and you can just drop this class." And I told her, "No. If I fail, I fail, but I am not going to drop it." She said, "Well, it is going to be very hard. You are going to struggle." I'm like, it's okay, and I know if I want to do something, you know, if I really want to do it, then I will do it, and I told her, "Yes, and I am not going to give up. I am going to do it." And she is very proud of me now. She is like, "You have been doing a good job."

Similarly, when Marie does not learn much in her second semester English class, she does not assume that the fault is with her. Instead, despite his official position of authority in the institution, she places the fault with her teacher.

> There are bad teachers. And I am telling you, this one was the worst one. Because when he come in class, he didn't really care about, I mean, some nonsense joke he just giving to us. And sometimes he just opens the book, doing something else, I mean, it's not English at all. I think I wasn't learning anything, so I had to just drop the class. If I stayed and he would just give me a grade and pass me, I would just go to the next level. I would just have to drop it and do it over again. I wouldn't learn anything. Not all teachers are like that. That was the first one I had like that, I mean.

Marie does not look to the teacher as an expert who can validate her own ways of learning. She does not even seem particularly concerned with his evaluation of her since she assumes that she will pass. Instead, she focuses on whether or not she will be able to learn from this teacher, whether he will be able to help her acquire the skills, knowledge and strategies she needs to improve her English. When she decides that her teachers will not be able to meet her standards, she decides to drop the course.

Gabriela shows that she is able to evaluate messages she receives about her racial identity, and she rejects these messages when they are incompatible with her own images of herself.

> I got a job. At the beginning, it was okay. But after, I see a lot of discrimination involving American people, and also I saw discrimination from Latino people to Latino people who work there. Discrimination in your face. When you start to work in there everything is okay. But then things are going on and you see things I didn't like.
>
> For example, one of the things was one day on my free day I went there to write stuff for myself. And one of the lady, she told me when I was paying, she don't want to make the discount for the benefits. I'm working there full-time. They told me, "Every time that you came here, you have to come in from the back door." And I say, "No, I don't think so. I don't think so." And I went from the front door. And after that I was thinking, that's not fair. These people do not appreciate the work that you're doing. They think, and they treat you badly, treat me bad, and they think that I'm Latino. I don't know, or the slave, something like that. I believe in the people right and the human rights. That's not my personality that people treat me bad. So I say I don't think so. I say forget it. And yesterday, I call and I say I was

> sick, "I'm sorry, I don't feel well, I'm not going to work tonight. I'm sorry." And I feel great. I feel good.

Like Marie, Gabriela does not allow the opinions of others to determine how she should feel about herself. Resisting her co-workers' attempts to treat her "badly," as "the slave," Gabriela evaluates her work according to her own standards. She has her own definition of what is "fair" and how she should be treated. When others do not live up to these standards, she is able to critique their behavior.

After beginning classes with some American students, Gabriela also reevaluates her fears that these students are somehow superior to her.

> For the first day of my English class I got American classmate, two Americans. I felt bad because I got an American classmate for first time, and they didn't seem to me friendly as another international student. But also I thought if they are American, they are on this level, it is so low, it's a pre-college course. They should be in English 111, not here. But on the first day of class also, the teacher give us an assignment, a topic and he start asking about grammar. I did good on that part. But for the writing, one of the boy, he finish his assignment in 20 minutes of class. The first 20 minutes and I was struggling for my ESL dictionary. I looking for words and thinking and organizing ideas. He was done. He just went through and also the American girls. I was like "oh my God." I felt so bad. The next class, I have to work with this guy who finished in the 20 minutes. That guy, he was really good. We finished. We was the first group to finish. But then I saw that what is his problem is that he cannot stay in class more than 20 minutes for the whole time class. He doesn't have any more idea to write. He just finish. I was like thinking, reviewing, doing this, doing that.

Gabriela realizes that this American student has limitations that she does not have. He cannot stay in class for long and quickly runs out of ideas for his writing. In contrast, she sees that she is able to continue working, thinking, and reviewing to improve her work. Gabriela no longer seems to feel that American students should necessarily be on a level above her simply because they are Americans.

Sonja also re-evaluates her feelings toward American students and ESOL classes. When she first began the program, Sonja saw ESOL classes as having low status. While she describes the program as "very good," she also felt that she was "wasting time" preparing for "real" classes.

> I want to get away from this program so badly because I want to like go to regular class and real college, to real like class with people that speak English. But I would

> probably fail or something so I think this is a very good way for people that don't speak English as a first language to start.

However, by the end of the first semester, Sonja realizes that the program was very valuable to her. She learned a great deal and feels "lucky," "fortunate" to have been in the program.

> And I told you, at the beginning I wanted to get away from it. I don't want to go to real English now, I think I'm going to miss this. I know that I have to go to some kind of English. And I know that I wasn't ready for the real. So I knew that I need some program. At the same time, so I was ready to go for it, but I wasn't happy about it. I didn't feel happy about it. Not until I started, no. Because all the time, oh, I want to get away from this, I want to get away from here. So I feel ESL is labeled. So, my God, I'm going to school, taking these classes, and wasting more time. But when I started now, I realize, actually, I'm not afraid to go. I'm just, I guess I just realize how happy I was to go to this program, how lucky I was, how fortunate I was, how much it helped me.

After finishing the ESOL/Psychology program and taking "real" classes for one semester, Sonja no longer accepts the idea that ESOL classes are lower in status. She is able to reevaluate her former beliefs and the messages of the institutional culture about the value of her coursework and her value as an ESOL student.

> To be honest, to be really, really honest, I think that I learned much more in my previous, which I didn't get credit and I feel so unhappy for it. Because this semester from English I didn't learn anything new. It was like repetition. Maybe math a little bit.

And Sonja realizes that she can also perform successfully in classes with American students.

> I'm more confident. Now when I have to deal with American students, I'm not afraid of them anymore. I was very afraid at the end of the my ESL program, of American students. I was very afraid of American. Now I'm not afraid of them anymore.

In some important ways, then, learners moving toward Self-Authorship have greater protection from the negative evaluations of others. However, as they learn to rely on their own standards for successful learning, they also run the risk of letting themselves down if they fail to meet those standards. Sonja explains,

> I have one goal to finish [the semester]. Because maybe after that semester, if I finish that semester good enough, I could think to transfer to some other college. But I'm still not ready because, if I do poorly, I would be like I'm nothing. So I think maybe the next semester and real English, I can maybe help to take the chance to try.

Since more Self-Authoring students rely on their internally constructed standards to evaluate their learning and performance, indications that they are not meeting these standards or living up to their own potential are likely to feel like a loss of competence and control.

These risks are somewhat mitigated by these students' capacities to review and reflect on their own standards and values, to revise their own theories when they perceive them to be inadequate. We see indications that some students moving toward Self-Authorship do engage in this process of revision. Reflecting on her own experiences of feeling offended by the ignorance of Americans, Sonja sees that she has also acted in ways which could offend people who come from different cultural backgrounds.

> I see that I can connect with Asian students. I can talk with them. I see that I can learn a lot of them, from them. It's so interesting, and it's important that it's like open me. I am feeling that I'm not limited anymore that I like now. At first, I thought that we are very different from each other. And I thought that people from, I don't know, China, they listen only that kind of music. And then I asked that girl, "Have you ever heard about Madonna and Michael Jackson?" And when she told me that they actually heard about Madonna, about, I was like, "Oh, really?" When I came here, when I meet my friend, he's American, and he asked me, "Have you ever heard about Tupac?" And my sister, she had a room full of his pictures and his book, and I was like, I was like, "Are you crazy?" I even get mad. "How can you ask me something like that?" And then I was thinking, "Hey and you asked that Chinese girl if she ever heard, and. . . ." And I tried to compare how was I thinking about that people, about some other people that's not from my country, and, and then I start to compare how I behave, according to them. That's opened me. That's why I am feeling it's opened me. I don't feel like I'm limited anymore. I feel like I'm just born again. And I'm really grateful for that opportunity to see that, to see so many different people. And I'm just here one year. Can you imagine that? So, I practically didn't see anything yet because, you know, the first one, the first year, you don't even know where you are. And, I'm always more open. That's what I like about school.

When presented with information that contradicts her theories, Sonja can use this information to construct more complex theories.

The ability to reflect on and perhaps revise one's theories is often accompanied by increased appreciation for adversity and conflict. Self-Authoring students such as Serge, Marie, and Sonja can interpret conflict as an opportunity for growth that does not fundamentally threaten their sense of self. They are therefore more open to receiving and learning from differences of opinion, which lead them to form more complex and inclusive solutions.

> Initially, I didn't want to make any mistakes, but I learn that you have to learn by your mistakes. You can't be shy, you have to talk to some of the people and they say, no this is not the way you say that. When you learn it, you don't say it that way anymore. (Serge)
>
> You are always criticizing the thing. And the thing is, once you really have an idea about what you are going to do, once you get an idea, it's like, "Oh, my God." This is what I have learned; before I criticize something, I have to take a chance first. Give the thing a chance, you know, to see what is it about, what's going to happen to it. And before I do, say something else. (Marie)
>
> I remember my math teacher from my country, I hated that woman. I just couldn't stand her. She failed me once on the math. But she told me, "You cannot study math. You cannot, like, not study anything and then expect to study everything in one or two days and then just kind of say ask me now. That's not how I'm doing. You're failing. I don't care that you know now everything." And I hated her. Now if I see her, now I'll say thank you to her. That's a good teacher. Teacher who's not afraid to flunk you. (Sonja)

In these instances, students describe the ways that conflict, disagreement, or adversity contributed helpfully to their own development. Because they can retain their own perspectives while comparing them to other, contrasting perspectives, they are able to consider ways that integrating new ideas with their own can be beneficial.

A developmental perspective illuminates differences in the ways that students experience and respond to harmful messages about the value of their cultural identities. Some but not all students in our study seem to be effectively able to resist these messages, to respond to them in ways that enable them to continue to experience themselves as effective and able learners. Those students operating predominantly with Socializing ways of understanding, however, are at risk for internalizing messages that devalue them and jeopardize their ability to maintain an overall sense of confidence and optimism about their learning. Yet, when we look at students' overall descriptions of themselves, we continue to see evidence that they are able to feel positive about their abilities and potentials as students.

Overall Evaluations of Themselves as Students

The most hopeful way for students to exercise agency is to acquire the necessary skills to succeed in the academic world while maintaining a positive sense of their cultural identity. When students develop a sense of hopefulness about and belief in their own capacity to achieve, they are more likely to persist toward their own academic, social, and occupational goals (Lin, 1999). Despite the many obstacles and negative messages they face, we find that, on the whole, the students in our study possess a positive sense of their own agency. They view themselves as students in ways which seem closest to this third, most hopeful type of response. Developing the possibility for this type of response is often contingent on mediating forces such as teachers, program structures, and peers. We will consider such factors later in this chapter. First we will illustrate the ways our students retain a positive sense of their own agency in making successful transitions into their role as students at an American community college.

At the end of the first semester, when they had completed the ESOL/Psychology program, the students describe feelings of success, confidence, pride, and optimism.

> I success in this program. I feel confident. I success in drawing class and Psychology class. I got all A's in psychology class. Yes, and from the ESL class, I skip English 095. Yeah, I go to English 111. Now I can write the essay in order. And it make me success. Now I feel confident by myself because now I feel good, a little bit intelligent. The success help me improve my study. I satisfied what I did." (Minh)
>
> The best thing is that I finally completed the ESL program. I didn't know that I will pass it. In the beginning, I was thinking, I don't think I will make it because of all the writing skills, the work that she gave us in psychology. I thought that I would have to continue on studying, but I did pretty good in it. (Xuan)
>
> First, you get improvement in your thinking, first, and your writing. And you eventually gain a good feeling about yourself. And you get more confidence about yourself. Well, the confidence came because you're studying something different or like a particular psychology class is very hard. And it makes you feel different. And then you got like an A for psychology. It's a hard field, and new concepts. And they have hard language and different words. And it makes you feel good about yourself, like you did all that things, and you eventually get an A. Like, wow, what a good thing you did. (Abdel)
>
> Oh, it's good. We had a difficult time. Yes, it was very long, and too many assignments to do, but it was good. Sometimes it was tough, but now I feel like I did something, that it helps me to see how it was great to start something and to get

> this thing done. Kind of I am grading myself, and I know now that I did well. (Armand)
>
> It was good, because I studied very hard. I got good results. I'm very happy. (Fawzia)

The students' descriptions do not focus on the ways that the difficulty of the work has frustrated them or caused them to question their own abilities. The fact that the work was difficult yet they have still found ways to succeed seems to have bolstered these students' feelings of accomplishment.

With the end of the first semester, these students graduated from their pilot program. They were not required to take ESOL classes, no longer enrolled in classes as a cohort, and could now receive college credit for their subject-matter courses. We spoke with them again at the end of their second semester, to see how they had experienced this transition. For the most part, the students report having had good experiences, retaining their sense of achievement and optimism. Their experiences, however, were not as uniformly positive as they were during the first semester. Some students had teachers they felt were too difficult or unfair. Three students—Fawzia, Marie, and Natalia—chose to withdraw from classes because they were unhappy with their teachers. Many students describe classes and subject matter that were particularly difficult for them. As a result, Minh and Gilles feel that they did not achieve the success they had wanted.

> Last semester, I got on the good grade. And this semester, my grade is not good as last semester. Last semester, I feel confident by myself about writing class. But this semester, I feel nervous and worried about writing. Different was from last semester and this semester. Just only for writing. And the other class is okay. I feel difficult. I feel more worried than last semester. (Minh)
>
> I learned a lot. But it was hard. So I tried. I did my best. Like English class, I didn't pass it, I got the incomplete. I'm going to finish it next semester. Yes, that was hard for me. I am not pretty sure about how to write an essay or paragraph. I always get confused. I learned a lot, but not really well, so. I don't take biology right now. I am going to take it soon. I cannot take it because my English is too low. So, maybe next semester. (Gilles)

Other students, such as Abdel, Natalia, and Sonja, struggled with difficult teachers and complicated subject matter but felt they were able to find ways to succeed.

> It was a very good experience. The difficult one is that just the final exams. They all came on the same week. Very difficult part about it. I made a plan in the last

> couple weeks. Because I have to finish accounting in the last day. I have three finals in the same week. So I thought that if I took two earlier I would give myself a chance to study for accounting. That's what I did. It was great. It worked. I get an A on those, and I'm not sure with accounting yet. I did it on my own. I study hard. Very hard. From ESL to college courses, that's a big change. (Abdel)
>
> The semester was difficult, yes. It was. Biology was exciting, which was wonderful. It was beautiful, but it was real hard. The test that he give us was word problems. I was doing this dictionary. My first two grades was 45 and 50. My last was 100. I feel success because I finish my courses without any C. I finish the hardest class. I was jumping around, jumping on everybody. I was like, "Yeah, I finished! I finished! I'm done! I'm done! I'm done!" I really wanted all my credits. So for me, it was, like, I really want to do it, so please, and I did it. (Natalia)
>
> I didn't have trouble in English class even though I was afraid, because I didn't know what to expect there. But I didn't have trouble at all. And I finished that class, like, very easily. I got the best grade. But I am very, very bad at math. I'm very bad, very bad. I cannot even describe. I was on basic one, which is 090. That's, like, really basic stuff. My little sister, she's, like, 14 years, she is laughing all the time when I'm showing her my homework. But that really exhausted me because I'm very bad, and I had to put extra work for the math. And my professor, she's a good, she's a good professor. But she's very strict. She never smiled. And I'm just not used to work with people like that. But after a couple of days of studying really hard, I started to make progress. And then I ask her, am I going to fail? She is, like, "No, no. You make progress." (Sonja)

Finding a way to overcome their obstacles, these students report feeling good about their success and hopeful about their abilities to continue to succeed.

A final group of students report uniformly good experiences during their second semester. They make explicit statements about the high levels of confidence they feel, as well as their sense that they will be able to reach their goals.

> In September, I didn't have any idea, I was not sure about my English. I have to work on that, try to learn more, speak well, especially write because to write is not easy in English. So I was not confident in myself, but I just realize learned good, and I can do school in English. I can start practicing in the field and continue in a four-year college, so before I was not able to see that. I was doubting of what I can do and my skills, but now I just learned that it is possible to do it. (Armand)

> I feel so happy. Because my plan is to know more English, to speak well, correct way. So I guess that's I want. I got what I want, so I am happy. If I do it well, it's not hard. Nothing is hard. (Fawzia)
>
> I feel I'm more positive now, and I know that I can do whatever I want to. I will do it. I always think this way, but not here because it's more difficult. I saw other people that they went through to [a local four-year university], they study here, and then they went to another university, and other immigrants that they just are going to graduate. If he can do this, I can do this, too. I can do it. (Gabriela)
>
> It was really, really great for me. I mean, I have learned a lot, things that I didn't even expect. Every time you take a new class, I think it's progress. I think it is. A new progress for you. Because I remember when I first came here, I couldn't, I was afraid of open my mouth and talk to people. I always thought that I would never be able to speak this language. I mean, even I don't speak it really well, but I have made a lot of progress. I think I can do anything if I want to. (Marie)
>
> I have more confidence in myself now. Because when I came here in September I told myself that because I don't speak English, I would not be able listen my teacher, and he will not be able to understand me, too. And now I feel more comfortable now. I understand more. I noticed that I'm more self-confidence in myself. More self-esteem and willing to help anyone that just came to this college, trying to explain them how to be able to understand their assignments and what they have to do pass the course. (Serge)

Overall, the students' self-evaluations are less glowing than before, but they generally retain a belief in their own abilities as learners, enthusiasm for their work, and optimism about their futures. Despite the many obstacles and risks they face, they have demonstrated an ability to navigate the transition of acculturation, successfully taking on new roles as college students in American institutions. We wondered about the contextual factors that enable students to retain these largely positive images of themselves. In this next section, we turn our attention to the nature and characteristics of the supports students rely on within the program and institution as a whole.

SECTION V: HOLDING ENVIRONMENTS

How Teachers and Peers Create Communities that Support Consciousness Development

A developmental lens not only provides a structure for the interpretation of intellectual and cultural demands on adult learners, it also suggests particular forms of support institutions might offer to buffer those demands in wholesome ways. The claim that one function of an educational institution is to support its learners through a series of complex but typical transitions arises from a conception of educational institutions as directly responsible for students' emotional well-being as well as their cognitive growth. Recent work in the study of community colleges as supportive environments describes this function as contributing to students' "emotional capital," a concept derivative of the notion of "cultural capital" put forward by critical theorists (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999; Valadez, 1999). As we noted, cultural capital refers to the forms of social understanding and the web of connections adult learners can build in such social systems as community colleges that lead to greater capacities to negotiate and benefit from the economic gains that social access can provide.

Critical social theorists advocate that community colleges ought to become self-aware of the seductive pull of vocational and technical training for institutions and students alike, seeing these programs as straightforward avenues to economic advancement. However, these programs also may undermine the development of higher-order reasoning skills that prepare students to critique the social structures that act as barriers to their social advancement. "Critical pedagogists consider critical thinking as a key, but not singular element of 'critical political consciousness' and express strong concern that both students and teachers 'transcend the rote-based fragmented thinking that has degraded modernist schools'" (Bairey-Ben Ishay, 1994, p. 18, citing Kincheloe, 1993, p. 25).

Immigrant students in community colleges are especially prone to select vocational programs as the focus of their educational efforts when they have not yet developed a broader understanding of how technical education functions in American society. In some ways, technical education helps fulfill a social need for a base resource pool of fairly low-skilled employees who can fill service and production sector jobs. "If all the community college emphasizes is the opportunity to learn vocational skills at the expense of diminishing other possibilities and dimming student futures, it reproduces a class structure" (Rendon, 1999, p. 198) rather than giving students a choice about an array of professional and personal development opportunities. Adult learners who build "social capital" are better able to read these opportunities because they are more fluent in decoding socioeconomic markers, such as class distinctions and social tiering.

> Studies of social capital in education find that student success is deeply affected by the social relationships within schools. Successful secondary schools, for example, function as "communal organizations." Such schools are characterized by a sense of shared purpose, and have practices that give life to these common beliefs, especially social relations centered around moral norms stressing responsibility and self-development. When these features join together, they promote engagement in students and commitment in teachers. (Bryk, Lee, and Holland, 1993, p. 275)

Emotional capital, by extension, is a source of positive self-appraisal and empowerment that aids individual students in conceiving of themselves as deserving of the full resources of the educational institution and thus of the broader society it represents.

> Viewing emotional capital as the capacity of an organizational culture to hold in place positive appraisals of well-being directs attention to how programmatic and cultural factors intertwine and mutually strengthen one another. The analysis of emotional capital clarifies how educational settings can respond to the needs of culturally diverse, at-risk students whose practical difficulties are aggravated by cultures in which negative and dispiriting interpretations of reality predominate. (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999, p. 20)

As a social analysis of the 'production' of self-esteem, the idea of emotional capital directly connects institutional values and norms for supporting students with their ability to make desired gains in a new society.

> In educational settings characterized by high levels of emotional capital, the environment as it is socially constructed will be experienced as benign or at least manageable within the stock of available coping resources. Under these conditions, students are able to concentrate on their studies and are not distracted by potential threats, worries or other preoccupations that might lurk on the periphery of awareness. (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999, p. 18)

Necessarily, the contours of this "environment" need to reflect both the students' emerging goals for themselves (as full participants in and also intelligent critics of the educational setting) as well as the organization's goals for its students. And the elements of a positive environment will necessarily attend to the psychological as well as the social aspects of student support. A useful framework for considering how to best design such an environment draws on what developmentalists call a "holding environment," the "psychosocial environment" which "is the particular form of the world in which the person is, at this moment in his or her evolution, embedded (and) the very context in which, and out of which, the person grows" (Kegan, 1982, p. 116). The study of holding environments brings the question of "goodness of fit" of support directly to the issue of where students are currently positioned developmentally and where they need to next move (Kegan, 1994). In other words, a good holding environment meets the students where they are, confirms their current way of knowing, and then stimulates them to grow beyond their existing perceptions to new and greater ways of knowing. The holding environment must be "good both at holding on *and* letting go" (Kegan, 1982, p. 127).

"Best practice" research in community college settings confirms the importance of this dual function of the holding environment. In their analysis of community college environments "which are particularly successful in educating at-risk populations," Dennis McGrath and William Van Buskirk (1999) specify that "they provide a balance between support and letting go so that students do not become either alienated from or overly dependent on the programs . . ."

> These programs function as "holding environments" (Kegan, 1982), providing safe places for students to try out new identities and new ways of behaving while structuring out anxiety-producing considerations. By helping students reinterpret their experiences in ways that build a sense of competence, they allow them to concentrate on the task at hand . . . At the same time that these programs 'hold' students in a safe and supportive environment they also encourage independence so that they can move on. As students develop new competencies they must shift their attention to the future and move on to new educational or professional settings. The programs must shift their orientation from immediate support to promoting a sense that the organization will still 'be around for them.' . . . This balance of 'holding on' and 'letting go' that Kegan describes as essential to adult development (Kegan, 1982) produces graduates who are neither alienated from the organization nor overly dependent on it. (pp. 32–33)

Community colleges that manage to simultaneously affirm students' existing perspectives while encouraging their growth "contain a plethora of organizational and cultural practices which engender

and maintain in students positive appraisals and hopeful images of themselves in the world" (McGrath & Van Buskirk, 1999,
p. 18). In our own research, we were especially interested in teaching practices that both confirmed and challenged students' ways of knowing. Teachers contribute in multiple ways to the construction of an appropriate environment. We explored how the typical styles of classroom management as well as teacher interactions with students reflect their assumptions about what students are capable of in terms of both understanding and performance.

As our research progressed, we also became interested in the role of the student cohort in the holding environment culture. For the adult learners we followed in this setting, the first semester brought membership in a larger, cohesive group of international students who were co-enrolled in the ESOL program. The group as a whole shared two classes together in the fall (ESOL and psychology, as mentioned above) and kept company in other ways, including study groups, friendships, and a romance. The second semester brought a rather abrupt dissolution of the formal cohort as students moved on to regular classrooms across the college. Their experiences of the cohort and their transition into the broader school environment suggest important aspects of group experience that matter greatly to learners' overall schooling experience. These two aspects of the holding environment as viewed by the learners in our study—teacher support and the cohort—will be reviewed in more detail here.

Teacher Supports

The participants in our study consistently remark on the importance of teachers' efforts in helping them progress as students. The forms of their descriptions of teacher support vary of course, depending on individual preferences. However, a pattern emerges from the student descriptions of teacher help that suggests again a conformity among student perspectives that transcends their evident cultural and personal differences. These patterns relate to their conceptions of the teachers' responsibilities, intentions, and methods for enhancing learning in the classroom. As prior developmental research would predict, these patterns are consistent with the discrete expectations of teachers held by learners in other higher educational settings who share a developmental position with our ABE learners. They mirror these expectations in the following ways:

- Those participants who are primarily Instrumental knowers, like Perry's dualists, focus their expectations on the clarity and specificity with which imparted knowledge is communicated by teachers. They prefer teachers whose strategies include direct guidance and modeling of desired behavior. They dislike teachers who ask them to compare or contrast multiple points of view or sources of knowledge.

- Those participants who are solidly positioned at a Socializing way of knowing appreciate teaching methods aimed at building their understanding in addition to supporting skill development. They appreciate teachers who enthusiastically and compassionately employ methods that help them apply their learning to broader goals. They dislike teachers who discourage their tentative expressions of their own opinions.

- Those participants who are beginning to demonstrate a Self-Authoring way of knowing want their ideas to be valued and taken seriously by teachers. They look forward to vigorous exchanges with teachers and peers where perspectives are actively compared and contrasted. They generate their own standards for educational practice and critique themselves and their teachers against them. They dislike teachers who will not share responsibility with students for shaping work standards and processes.

These findings are stimulating for us because they suggest that developmental frameworks are also informative for adult learners of diverse cultural backgrounds who hold variable educational aspirations and that gradated forms of support practiced in traditional educational settings might be equally beneficial for learners in ABE settings. In these pages, we will look at how ABE learners' differently construct the teachers' role, the conclusions they draw about their own agency as students, and their ability to navigate key transitions in relationship to the forms of support they receive.

More stimulating, however, are the implications of these findings for the larger debate currently underway in communities of researchers, teachers, and policymakers concerning the appropriateness of different pedagogic frameworks for teaching and learning in community colleges that serve large ESOL populations. These debates tend to be value-laden and prescriptive, with contributors arguing over the political and social impact of various classroom cultures on students' capacities to direct their own lives. If institutional value systems are replicated in classroom environments, institutional core assumptions about learners' abilities are reflected in teacher practice. Our data suggest that the debate over classroom culture would benefit from an understanding provided by students themselves that they bring preferences for school cultures that reflect their current forms of consciousness development, and which, at the very least, need to be taken into account when establishing norms for teacher practice (See Quigley, 1997).

Our data suggest, for example, that **elements of the "democratic" classroom experience emphatically endorsed by the critical, emancipatory educational literature are inconsistently successful for the students in our study**. An undergirding premise of these approaches is that students should be invited to co-

construct knowledge and build a sense of their efficacy through collaborative forms of learning. The participants in our study made differing interpretations of this invitation by teachers to actively participate in the shaping of classroom culture. While some (Self-Authoring) learners openly embraced it, other (Instrumental) learners rejected it. Conversely, elements of classroom experience or teaching style sometimes portrayed in the literature as inappropriately authoritarian and disempowering actually appeal to Instrumental students.

We will look at these varying preferences in light of the discussion of "mono" and "multi" cultural classroom environments, suggesting that learners at different stages of development will resonate with those cultures that most closely approximate their preconceptions about how education ought to proceed. An implication of this discussion is that classroom cultures might be more successfully viewed as representing a continuum of needs and preferences rather than as closed categories that reflect only political motivations to dominate or liberate. Adult learners may need various forms of support consistent with their developmental level as well as with a declaredly transformative institution's aims to liberate them from authoritarian claims on their minds. And for students who are currently consolidating the developmental level most consistently represented across our sample—Level 3, the Socializing way of knowing—supports that scaffold emerging capacities to reflect critically on one's education will need to be drawn out. These students will need to be supported in "growing into" multicultural classroom environments. These implications will be taken up after we more thoroughly review how students' preferences for teacher support reflect their current developmental positions.

Student Perceptions of Teacher Support

Just as the participants in our study differently see their roles and tasks as students so, too, do they differently construct the supports that they want and receive from teachers at the community college. In many ways, the supports that learners desire fit well with their conceptions of their role as students. They define their aims and tasks as students in a particular way and see the institution as more or less effectively supporting them in accomplishing personal goals. At the same time, learners never wholly give up simpler, more Instrumental concerns and desires for support around them even as they develop more complex understandings and desires. **Increasing mental complexity seems to be evidenced not so much by a wholesale shifting of concerns but by a layering of additional concerns and perspectives on the foundation of those which preceded them**. We noted earlier that the range of developmental positions represented by these students is not expansive; some of the overlap in concerns may be driven by the common, Socializing perspective that underlies the participants in our study's thinking.

Growing From Instrumental Ways of Understanding

Not surprisingly, and in keeping with the developmental literature on student preferences in higher educational settings, Instrumental learners in our study tend to look for Instrumental supports from teachers. They prefer explicit assignments and descriptions of learning priorities ("He writes for us on the board everything important, yeah."—Yousef) as well as clear direction about how to do the tasks they see as the work of school. As Xuan explains in describing a favorite teacher's style,

> The way he teach and the way the book is, like there is a definition. I study the blue words, that's how I study. I never studied before in high school. . . . I really didn't. . . . The way he teaches, I understand the words; but, back in high school . . . the way my teacher teach, I don't really get, like there is no key words. The book that we have right now, there is a blue word for the definition. That's how I understand.

Students with an Instrumental perspective rely on help from teachers that is directed toward explanation and review. They report finding it useful to work with teachers who will be prescriptive in standards for work: They go after class to get corrections on their papers and to have teachers "check your homework" (Yousef). They expect teachers to tell them not only how to approach and think about a topic, but also to provide writing mechanics. Yousef, for example, prefers direct instruction in the elements of writing:

> She give us an option about five paragraphs—you have to choose one. I change it, she tell me, no, you just you stay here in this one. . . . Sometimes . . . she say everybody take one paper, write your name, give me topic sentence about anything.

Since knowledge for these learners is demonstrated primarily through skill gain, help often comes in the form of repeated opportunities for practice.

> Teacher . . . helped my success because she gave us a lot of assignments, and we got to practice at home . . . which is my responsibility. I have to do the whole homework . . . I complete all the homework that she gave us, and it make me a success. (Minh).

> Ya, she helped me, this is very good help. I feel that I learn many something new, but I think this is the best way, for practice, because we do practice . . . I did one paragraph seven times. (Yousef)

Clear, factual explanations are strongly preferred by these learners and constitute a large part of what counts as good teaching. They especially want teachers to speak slowly and to be organized in their explanations. Like Perry's dualistic knowers, they assert that there is one best explanation that just needs to be communicated well enough for the student to absorb it, perhaps through repetition. Xuan advises teachers that "the way to make it easier is if the teacher takes it slowly, like don't go too fast on teaching, and take notes." Yousef concurs, "Good teachers explaining to student very well . . . help us with homework, and explain for us the subject very well, and the rule of language also."

Ongoing relationships with teachers and advisors matter because they can facilitate the process of becoming and being a successful community college student. If a teacher knows a student, the student can trust that the teacher will take better care of the student's needs.

> My advisor is the same as my ESL teacher. This is good for me. Sometime your advisor, he don't know you, how you study that, how you understand it, which one you want to take. If you stay with the same advisor, this is good. It help you many things. You don't have to ask. He know which semester you have taken this. (Yousef)

Participants report that some relationships with teachers from the program did continue into the second semester. While these relationships are perceived as supportive and the continued availability of these teachers encouraging, the support itself was typically described by the Instrumental learners as more incidentally social than academic. The relationships, stripped of the context of daily directive instruction, were no longer perceived as mentoring. Because Instrumental learners tend to rely rather heavily and explicitly on direct academic scaffolding by teachers, they may be at risk when such support becomes less available. A community college environment like BHCC, which supports self-direction as a critical component for academic success, may be particularly challenging for these students. The concrete, skills-oriented perspective of these learners may be shaken by teachers who ask them to take on alternative viewpoints in their writing and work. In their developmental analysis of classroom practices in another, similar Massachusetts community college, Howard Tinberg and Ronald Weisberger (1998) underscore the implicit demands of curricula which carry "a whole complex of expectations and demand a full range of thinking skills" students have not yet developed.

> Kegan's work reminded (us) of this unfortunate fact: Teachers, in assigning tasks to their students, may assume a range of knowledge and abilities that those students have not yet attained; these expectations are rarely made explicit to the students. Instead they become part of a hidden curriculum or the "what exactly does the teacher want" game. (p. 50)

For Instrumental learners, the demand for self-direction may be experienced as an abandonment of supports. As the students in our study moved into the second semester, and explicit instruction gave way to more student-driven forms of learning, several of the Instrumental learners expressed confusion about teacher expectations and a degree of dismay over their inability to manage the work.

Balancing Around Socializing Ways of Understanding

Learners who are primarily embedded in a Socializing perspective still exhibit a preoccupation with skill development, as well as preferences for teachers who are clear and explicit in their directions and explanations. Fawzia and Ling-Hui describe teachers they found especially helpful:

> He was my English teacher for last semester. He was so good teacher. He told us to write an essay or a paragraph in the class. And for next class he put some marks . . . to make a correction and when he gives us back the paper we make correction—that

> means we rewriting. And we can do—we can understand our mistake easily. So it's a nice teacher. (Fawzia)

> Actually, I think with ESL teacher is very good. I learn a lot in the English class. She give us homework, but every day she check the homework, correct it very carefully. And I think the material she give us is very good, help us learn a lot. If she didn't give me these, maybe I won't understand psychology so much. (Ling-Hui)

Like Instrumental learners, Socializing learners prefer teachers who will explain things clearly and speak slowly so that they, as new speakers of English, can understand. As Tak-Jang notes, "The teacher always explains the psychology things with easy way and then I can understand what they said . . . They speak so slowly. It's not—it's not like I'm seeing a movie." Armand elaborates, "[A good teacher is] simple and clear [and] explains things easily in a nice way so people can understand what is business."

However, while an emphasis on learning skills and absorbing the particulars of knowledge remains, they are expanding and broadening their concerns in notable ways. Unlike Instrumental learners, Socializing learners are beginning to exhibit a focus on and interest in understanding concepts. And they express interest in considering different perspectives and sources of information on a topic.

> I always borrow some book from library to find out something extra information about human brain. Because English has so many way(s) to write about it. If this book have a different way to write about the human brain, and then another book have another way to tell about the human brain, and then I can learn more way to say the same thing about the brain. (Tak-Jang)

Socializing knowers also reflect approvingly on how teachers approach topics differently to meet the needs of a variety of students—as one participant puts it, he appreciates teachers who "focus on how the student is going to learn" (Jonas) rather than just on teaching through a prescribed set of methods.

> I like the teacher that explains more—well, different—a teacher that (makes) easy the subject for this students or her students by making it more easily to understand and developing different ideas to study the subject. (Abdel)

> So when we go to field trip she teach us something, and then we really learned. It's better than to teach just the textbook. (Ling-Hui)

ESOL students at this developmental position begin to talk about teachers as models for good behavior. Through listening and actively observing their teachers' conduct, they assimilate generalized norms for the new culture. Some learners focus more on learning specific moral or cultural behaviors.

> The teacher is telling you true things. I trust him to tell me true things. Yes. I don't do that. I don't smoke. I don't drink. I take his advice. (Gilles)

Others talk about learning more abstract sets of culturally prescribed behaviors from teachers, like "how to be independent" (Abdel) or about U.S. cultural norms.

> She didn't just teach us about the program, but also about American culture, about American way to live. So, that was interesting. So it was a kind of American culture class because you learn English. (Armand)

Some of these Socializing knowers report learning about novel, more independent ways to present themselves in American college classrooms. They recall with pride learning how to give voice to and defend their ideas. Support for demonstrations of emerging confidence in their reasoning processes often comes from a mix of peers and teachers. Natalia, for example, describes a pivotal event in her assertion of herself as a knower:

> So I'm start like a little bit stronger. And teachers, they said this, it's like a little bit better. I see how she [Sonja, a peer] fights in class, how she prove herself, and she was right, you know, she was right! I was, like, wow! That's something. I have to do this. I have to just listen this. I have to, probably I have to be a little bit stronger to show improvement in my thought. And I did a couple of times and I was, like, wow.
>
> I think it was something I was thinking. I said "It's not true." And teacher said "What?" This is the first time I said it's not true. But here I was saying strong, "It's not true, it couldn't be." I was trying! I said something that proved my thought. I was, like, wow, my God, I did it.

The development of independent thinking and voice comes, in part, when teachers value students' ideas. These Socializing knowers appreciate teachers who listen to and encourage the expression of ideas rather than focusing exclusively on skill development. Ling-Hui reports changes she notices in her willingness to ask questions that further idea development in the presence of a teacher who demonstrates her interest.

> It is easier to speak up in the class here because if our sentence has mistake, the English teacher can still understand. She know what we want to ask. She know what we are thinking. If I ask the question, but it's not a good question or my sentence is not good, but the teacher still very kindly to answer me, it will encourage me to ask.

Having their ideas valued helps these students build a reciprocal relationship with faculty. Many use images of care-taking and "mothering" to describe these relationships, appreciating when connections are built that are not strictly formal and academic.

> She act like we're her children, you know. We're like her babies. She all the time say to us, "You're the best class." Probably each class is the best because she's the

> best teacher. For me she was, like, she was the best. A lot depends on the teacher, actually. I found it, too. (Natalia).

> The English class, the teacher is like American mother. At first when I come to college I think maybe it's not very good, but I study this semester. I think the teacher take care of us. (Ling-Hui)

These students note and remark on the human qualities of these teachers. They comment not only on what teachers know and have to teach, but how they treat and value students. Tak-Jang, for example, describes a favorite teacher as having a "kind heart." These deeper, more expressly emotional connections lead learners to express their gratitude to their teachers by maintaining contact after classes end. Learners at this developmental position appreciate teachers who advise them and advocate for them beyond teaching study strategies. These learners report with gratitude actions their teachers have taken on their behalf, such as spending extra time advocating across the system to support a student's progress. Learners in this group consider advocacy fundamental to a supportive relationship.

> My friend, Irina, she didn't pass to [the next level writing class]. Everybody fight for her. Carol said, "Okay, you have to write, do this, and this and this. You know what—I don't have the time, but you should come this time to me, and we will talk about it. Please come." And she did all the paperwork. Everything. She did it for her. (Natalia)

One student summarized the mix of supports that Socializing learners most appreciate receiving from teachers—clear explanations, human relationships, and advocacy.

> I will really miss Carol. Yesterday we had like, like last class. I was almost crying, I was just, like, oh no. I don't want to go. It's real hard. I don't know if I'll have teachers like that again or not. But I know that they were the best for me. They did so much. They were, first of all, they were really good teachers. They were easy to explain. And second time, they were really good humans. Like they were people, not like somebody who came there, they blah, blah, blah, blah, they give us what they have to and just go away. Carol was always ready for fight for us. So she just, she's just human. (Natalia)

Socializing learners may be well poised to take advantage of the different forms of support teachers are willing to provide in the community college setting. They learn not only concrete skills from their classes, but also express growing interest in exploring ideas that connect them to larger conversations about how and what they know. For the participants in our study, the opportunity to observe cultural norms for American students is also central to their successful transition to the second semester and to later higher education. Supportive relationships with teachers who care about them as people are more likely to matter to these students than to more Instrumental learners. At the same time, they are unlikely to challenge the authority of teachers, or will at least (like Natalia) perceive such challenges as constituting a personal developmental advance. When teachers encourage the development and expression of their own ideas or confusions, these learners are supported in the move towards a more self-directed and Self-Authoring perspective.

Growing Toward Self-Authoring Ways of Understanding

Again, many of the concerns raised by learners at prior developmental positions are repeated by these learners, though these are often presented in somewhat more nuanced and complex ways. For example, these learners sometimes discussed very concrete and Instrumental concerns about getting to class on time and staying on top of lectures and assignments.

> You got to study and try to keep up with professor. If you do that, at the end of the semester you might be . . . get a good grade. Because she will ask you to do a lot of things. She will give you essays. She will give you things to do. You've got to do all these things . . . I was talking with a student that entered the program. I told him to study and try to understand. And make all your effort to be in class on time. That's what I can suggest, I can tell someone to do, is to study. (Serge)

Though these concerns sound like those of the Instrumental learners, these learners often embed these concerns in an understanding of their larger purpose or in a sense of how corrections lead to deeper learning.

> Because if you're responsible, you feel good when you're doing your job well, and it help you in the future. In my regular class, I be there on time. And the first five minutes the teacher explain, we will do this. I want this for the next day. And also when you get a job, when you get there in the first five minutes, I think is the most important time . . . Because the teacher gives the homework for the next day and you have to listen. And also when you work, it's tomorrow we will do this and do that. (Gabriela)

> When you have a lot of homework it is really hard. One time I spent two/three hours for one introduction, and I can't even get it. Three hours, I can't get it, really. Three hours—it discourage me. I'm, like, "My God. Why can't I do this? Why can't I just get this? I'm, like, torn apart. I'm going to drop out. I'm going to forget about stuff like." And then I'm like, "No. I'm gonna try. Even if it is not good." And I did. And I give it to Carol, and she correct it. I didn't do too good on it. She gave it to me back. I did it, and I got a B on it and I'm like, "Okay. Hey we don't know things. We just have to work hard." So I really feel like I wanted to drop everything in life. Sometimes I come in and the way you wanted to forget about things. And then you just have to realize that this is life. Nothing is easy. Everything is hard in life. (Marie)

Like the Socializing learners, they appreciate teachers who find different ways of "pass[ing] on information so everybody know" (Serge). These learners also pay attention to developing what they report as deeper understandings. They are excited when teachers help them learn to think and can reflect on that process.

> She has required us to do a lot of homework, writing . . . She taught us how to write and how to read and how to read an article, to catch the main idea . . . I think that's very helpful for me, yes. One of my teachers . . . gave us a lot of American

> literature. For example poems, novels. I like them so I can learn a lot of American thought, American life from this . . . [Chinese teachers] only teach you the skill for reading so you can read fast, fast, fast. They don't give you the tools to think. (Fei-Wen)

> And the professor is a really good professor. Really take his time and wants you to understand the concept, understand the subject. And if you don't understand something, he go and try to make it easy for you . . . like try to take something, the real life, and make you understand the concept. (Serge)

Like other learners, Self-Authoring learners appreciate the time that teachers spend to help them learn, especially when they're struggling. Benetta recalls her first semester teachers with admiration: "They were very special. They spend all the time—that's excellent because they help me a lot and together, they work together with me. This is the best semester that I ever had in my life." Like Socializing knowers, learners at this level appreciate simple encouragement they receive from teachers and advisors, even as they sometimes put this into the context of larger understanding goals.

> Sometimes we want to give up, and she is, like, behind us. "You can do it, guys. One more mile to go. You guys can do it. Oh, you have been great." No matter what we do she says, "Oh, you guys are being great." You know, if you did this, next time do better, but it is very good. You know, she is always encouraging us . . . She is proud of what you are doing but she expected more. So that makes you feel good that, you know, if I did more than that, she is going to be more proud of you. (Marie)

Encouragement can form the basis for developing relationships, but for Self-Authoring knowers, connections are valued more greatly when students see teachers working hard to understand their perspectives. Being understood and taken seriously as thinkers matters to these students. At the same time, unlike more Instrumental learners, these learners are able to take on their teachers' perspectives, imagining how they themselves are viewed or could be viewed by teachers.

> I got very enthusiastic teachers. Some teacher allow me to do whatever I wanted as long as there were guidelines. "Have to do it this way." I don't like those kind of teachers. The teacher doesn't have to be opposite, to be creative. Also, you have to have compassion with the student. You have to understand the problem the student. They're immigrants. (Gabriela)

> We know the professors are very flexible with us. I don't think that they make everything easy for us, but they are conscious that we don't know the language very well. (Benetta)

These learners also appreciate when teachers advocate for them within the broader community college context. However, unlike with Socializing knowers, advocacy can be effective when it supports the students' own actions to successfully negotiate the system.

> My teacher told me about a scholarship. And I applied for it in summer, and last week I received the letter that I get it, the scholarship. So that's something I can tell you. (Gabriela)

Because of their awareness of how teachers think and act on their behalf, learners at this position can experience sometimes uncomfortable or ambivalent forms of obligation to teachers who support their development. Sonja, for example, reports feeling responsible to Carol for doing well in the advanced English class to which the teacher had encouraged her to apply. Sonja felt she had to live up to the faith that Carol had placed in her, and to some extent, to protect Carol's integrity.

Learners who are growing into Self-Authoring knowers demonstrate more complex understandings of the relationships they have with teachers than do Instrumental or Socializing knowers. To a large extent, this growth involves being able to commit to independent evaluations of their educational experience or of their teachers' competence. Marie and Fei-Wen, for example, find teachers whose classes are "easy" problematic because, in their view, these teachers fail to take students seriously or to prepare them appropriately for their futures.

> I think some teachers they more care about their job. So sometimes they are very easy for the student . . . But the teacher is easy, I feel comfortable but I think that is not a good thing. So I like teachers who are hard. (Fei-Wen)

When Marie feels she isn't learning English and is just listening to her teacher tell "nonsense jokes," she decides to drop that class because she believes that if she stayed, she "wouldn't learn anything."

These learners are able to judge for themselves when they are being challenged to learn. They negatively evaluate teaching when it fails to facilitate that process, even if the class is easy and fun. Some students discover themselves changing their minds about teachers during the semester because they learn to value forms of challenge and pushing that initially seemed "mean."

> And at the beginning of the semester, I say, oh, my teacher is okay, but I think she's mean. But at the end of the semester, I love my teacher. I think I'm going to miss her . . . Because . . . she push you, she push you. And she want that you look inside of you. And she teach you that you can do it, and you can do it better. (Gabriela)

These students see the kinds of challenges that some teachers provide as going beyond skills or even understanding to incorporate student "growth." They think through the teachers' perspective to gain awareness of how teachers' visions for their development impact the quality of their learning.

> If you want to be a good teacher you must be proud of your job. You must be responsible for it. I think that's very important. If you are responsible the student will (keep) trying. So I like my teachers. They always want to help you, help the student give them something, make their growth. That's very important. (Fei-Wen)

Finally, when considering the advice of teachers, some Self-Authoring students are able to hold teachers' opinions in coordination with their own sense of what matters. In doing so, they can choose to go against a teacher's opinion and make a choice that they think is right for them.

> Every semester I get a tutor. Even my teacher say "You don't need a tutor." But I don't have the mentality that only bad student that are going to fail in that class that have very poor skills have to come to the tutor. I think that I need a tutor because I want to build my skills. I always think that. I don't think that I'm the baddest student in the world. I don't think also that I'm the brightest student in the world. But I need help. (Gabriela)

Students moving towards Self-Authorship recognize that part of what teachers can do for them is to push them towards more independent ways of knowing.

> The way that Carol helped us is-we need to be able to understand things, and we have to be able to do by ourselves. She helped every student . . . to become independent and then to feel comfortable when you are in a class by ourselves because she was not going to be able to help us every day. So we need to try to do as much as we can by ourselves. (Serge)

In some ways, this is a kind of paradoxical support—telling students what they should do so that they can better make decisions on their own at a later date. Yet it is just this sort of support for self-direction in learning that is appropriate for learners moving from a Socializing towards a Self-Authoring perspective.

The progression of concerns and support that we see among these students is not sequential and linear. Concerns that seem Instrumental recur in the talk of all of these learners. Yet some themes are only seen among learners with more complex views of themselves and the world. It is by identifying and understanding these layers of complexity that we can develop a fuller and richer picture of the various ways that community college students at different levels of development perceive their experiences.

Implications of Learners' Conceptions of Support for the Design of Classroom Cultures

Becoming familiar with the underlying perspectives that guide Instrumental, Socializing, and Self-Authoring knowers' views of teacher support brings us into conversation with debates on ideal classroom cultures. Robert Rhoads (1999) summarizes this debate in his report on a qualitative study of the "politics of culture and identity" in classroom cultures at Western Community College (a pseudonym). There, he distinguishes among two forms of classroom culture and links each to a broader social view of the appropriate role of education in immigrant acculturation. Arguing that "the assumptions we have of the other (and necessarily ourselves) are revealed through the educational interactions and endeavors we adopt in relation to our students," (p. 107) Rhoads infers from discrete classroom cultures at Western two basic stances toward immigrant identity. In "monocultural" classrooms, preference is given to authoritarian teaching strategies and passive student behaviors that reinforce the existing values of the dominant receiving culture.

> Monoculturalism is the idea that a singular culture prevails or ought to prevail within a given society or organization. Schooling based on monoculturalism reinforces an authoritarian view of education. As diverse students enter the institution, they are forced through educational tactics such as grading and other

> reward or punishment structures to leave behind their cultural ways and replace them with mainstream values exhibited by the school. Such a process is authoritarian because teachers make the key decisions and provide little to no opportunity for students to alter the cultural norms of the school. Consequently, they offer little hope for students to see themselves as agents in the transformation of the broader society. Socialization and education is a one-directional process: Teachers convey the proper norms, values, beliefs and attitudes to students, who must respond appropriately. Thus, from a monocultural perspective, educational institutions serve the purpose of socializing diverse students to the dominant culture of a society. Such a process necessarily involves devaluing the cultural understandings diverse students bring to the educational context. (Rhoads, 1999, p. 111)

Classrooms that operate under monocultural assumptions have been previously characterized by Freirian educators as committed to a "banking" model of instruction, where information deemed valuable by the culture is deposited by teachers and texts into student minds. "Teachers are seen to be the experts and keepers of knowledge and students are seen to be newcomers lacking relevant knowledge or experience and whose success is contingent upon their ability to grasp as many facts and as much information as possible" (Rhoads, 1999, p. 113). Students do not actively participate in the construction of knowledge nor are they expected to critique its sources or claims to legitimacy.

Multicultural classrooms, by contrast, are characterized by the embrace of a multiplicity of perspectives. Student perspectives are valorized not undermined. Teachers are agents of transformation, whose responsibilities are first to the development of student capacities to independently identify cultural value systems and critique them. Rhoads notes,

> Multiculturalism highlights the notion that multiple cultural identities exist within a society and therefore colleges ought to reflect the different ways of knowing and cultural forms diverse peoples bring to educational institutions. Such a perspective suggests a democratic form of education in which diverse voices are to be represented not only within the curriculum but within the organizing structures of the institutions…Faculty committed to multiculturalism tend to see education in a broad sense. For them, a community college education is more than preparation for a job. These faculty feel that one of their roles is to get students to think of themselves in terms of multiple roles: as family members, as residents of a community, as citizens of a country. (p. 115-116)

For teachers committed to developing multicultural classroom cultures, instructional strategies are dedicated to inviting broad participation and active debate. Teachers communicate to students their legitimacy as knowers whose contributions expand the scope of discussion rather than respond to it. Knowledge is viewed as coconstructed by communities of knowers who have a social obligation to share their views and demonstrate their differences.

> Faculty committed to multicultural education tend to see the pedagogical process in a different manner than faculty who reflect a monocultural perspective. For example, while monoculturalists speak of passing knowledge and skills on to students so that they could get jobs, multiculturalists tend to see the process as more interactive . . . (There is) an emphasis on democratic classrooms in which all students have opportunities to discuss their own experiences, and, in a very real sense, write their own educational histories. . . . Consistent throughout the discourse of multicultural teachers is a view of students as "equals" or as "partners" in the learning process. Although this group of faculty recognize that they have expertise and knowledge that students might not have, they also believe that students bring a great deal to the college in terms of their own understandings. (p. 117)

Because, in Rhoads' view, teachers who inculcate monocultural classrooms have different views of student identity than do those who actively structure multicultural environments, a strategy for effectively decoding how teachers come to act in particular ways in the classroom would be to uncover their underlying assumptions about students and chart them against a "spectrum reflecting a singular view of culture (monoculturalism) or a more multifarious view (multiculturalism)" (Rhoads, 1999, p. 110). While useful for uncovering teachers' predominant meaning systems, such a strategy apparently leaves out student influences on classroom culture.

When we consider what our data tell us about student preferences for teacher support, we conclude that there are important forms of reciprocal influence that teachers and students bring to bear on each others' understanding and behavior in classrooms that are linked to their predominant valuations of goodness in learning environments. The range of models that developmentalists who study adult educational settings have put forward all consistently suggest that students' preferences for certain forms of teaching vary with developmental position. These models, as reviewed at the beginning of this chapter, show students moving from positions of dualism (or instrumentalism) that preference teachers as authorities who unequivocally impart reified knowledge upon students-as-novices, to the eventual development of contextual (or Self-Authoring) knowers who incorporate "the exchange and comparison of views in their learning process, which was aimed at thinking through knowledge claims and integrating information in order to apply it within a context" (Baxter Magolda, 1992, p. 177). In their models of student preferences, these developmentalists anticipate Rhoads' distinctions among classroom cultures without confirming his political analysis of the sources of these differences. Indeed, the similarities between Rhoads' depiction of these cultures and those reported by developmentalists as preferences for learning environments expressed by students at Instrumental and Self-Authoring positions are uncanny. Consider, for example, this summary chart (see Table 6) prepared by Laura Rendon of the key differences between monoculturalism and multiculturalism in her essay on Rhoads' (and colleagues') ideas applied to "a new vision of the multicultural classroom for the next century."

Table 6: Classroom Elements of a Monocultural and Multicultural Community College[9]

Monocultural Community College Classroom Elements	Multicultural Community College Classroom Elements
• Students are engaged in menial tasks.	• Students are engaged in critical thinking and problem solving.
• Faculty employ authoritarian forms of pedagogy. --Culturally different views are devalued. --System of rewards and punishments prevails. --Linear teaching is employed. --Faculty are authority figures and keepers of knowledge.	• A democratic classroom is created. --Diverse voices are represented. --Faculty and students are open to diverse points of view. --Students are equal partners in teaching and learning. --Faculty share knowledge and learn from students.
• Students are not viewed as knowers.	• Students have the opportunity to discuss their own experiences and write their own histories.
• Student docility and passivity are viewed as positive qualities that help faculty work with students.	• Students are active learners and assisted to negotiate the college environment.
• Students expected to conform to predetermined standards of academic proficiency.	• Standards are set with students.
• The curriculum is Euro-centered.	• Diverse forms of knowledge are recognized and legitimated.

While it is undoubtedly true that teachers and institutions exhibit, through pedagogical design, their ideas about the proper aims of students' education, it is also likely true that students in turn press their own demands on teachers, if not directly then through the ways in which they respond to classroom cultures that are differentially suited to their current developmental position. The Instrumental knowers in our study demonstrate motivation and enthusiasm for learning when teachers are "authority figures and keepers of knowledge" and feel resistant and mystified when expected to be "equal partners in teaching and learning." At the other end of the developmental spectrum, the more Self-Authoring knowers in our study express disappointment in themselves as students if they fail to be recognized as active "knowers" and gain agency when they "have the opportunity to discuss their own experiences and write their own histories."

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[9] Taken from Rendon, L. I. Toward a new vision of the multicultural community college for the next century. In K. M. Shaw, R. A. Rhoads & J. R. Valadez, (1999) (Eds.), *Community Colleges as Cultural Texts: Qualitative Explorations of Organizational and Student Culture* (pp. 200-201). Albany: State University of New York Press. Note: In her chapter, Rendon notes that this table "represents a summary of organizational elements as presented in Shaw, Valadez, & Rhoads (1999). *Community College as Cultural Texts: Qualitative Explorations of Organizational and Student Culture*."

A holding environment that takes into account student preferences in partnership along with political frames on emerging immigrant identity will not, as might be inferred here, equally preference all forms of instruction or styles of teaching. Instead, it will consider how students do make sense of the learning experience and both "confirm" students' present understandings while actively working to "contradict" them so as to support the emergence of greater capacities. In his reflections on how to make his own teaching in a community college with a large immigrant population better able to encompass different learner perspectives, Howard Tinberg and Ronald Weisberger (1998) cite Kegan's (1994) metaphor of "bridges" that can be successfully constructed between waning and waxing forms of consciousness. Tinberg, noting that "the journey is not the same thing as the destination" (p. 54), argues for flexibility on the part of teachers who may personally preference interactive, student-centered forms of teaching but who recognize also that some subgroup of their students may be intimidated by and poorly prepared for their expectations for self-direction and brazen participation.

Developmentalists can, like critical pedagogues, continue to value forms of education that liberate students' emergent capacities to think and act on their own behalf. And they can assert that an Instrumentalists' frame of reference and a contextualist's are not equally adequate. What they are not free to declare, however, is that classroom cultures that preference one position are adequate as holding environments for all learners at any stage of growth. Instead, their observations of adult learners suggest that adequate classroom cultures will somehow bridge the continuum between the monoculturalists and multiculturalists among the student body, whose common agenda is to be successful as students.

Learner Perceptions of Peer Supports

Adequate holding environments do not solely rely on the intentional construction of appropriate contexts. They also take advantage of "naturalistic" forms of support—"those relations and human contexts which spontaneously support people through the sometimes difficult process of growth and change." (Kegan, 1982, p. 256) These emerge from or are native to the social system, and include close relationships with others who are travelling the same journey at the same time. At BHCC, the peer group that was formed out of the coincidence of co-enrollment in an ESOL program became an important source of nurturance and affirmation for many of the learners in our study. While not surprising in itself, the importance of support provided by peers at BHCC to immigrant students suggests that there are, by contrast, risks afforded to learners who either cannot access such group support or who lose contact with it prematurely (in relationship to their needs).

At BHCC, the peer group peaked as a robust context for support at the end of the first semester; its importance trailed off as students move away from shared courses and to independent forms of study. Our data tracks this peaking and ebbing of peer support in the following way: At the beginning of the first semester, students do not anticipate the importance of peers or predict that they will become a direct influence on their experience of success. Many of them anticipate, for example, that their study strategies will be organized primarily around solo study and teacher support. Also, several participants feel strongly that they will remain socially isolated at BHCC. At the transition between semesters, the participants in our study are nostalgic for the group and highly anxious about how they will fare without the group's ongoing presence in the second semester. They describe the influence of the group on their learning processes and remark that the group became a primary context for collaborative study. They recall with fondness friendships they made and are articulate about the types of affiliations that formed.

At the end of the second semester, the participants in our study once again characterize themselves as somewhat isolated and dedicated to independent study habits. They seem resigned to bearing the burden of academic expectations and stress independently, or they are relying again primarily on family members for support. The absence of the cohort in the second semester made it difficult for some students to feel as connected to BHCC emotionally and to demonstrate transfer of some learning skills the cohort helped scaffold. Gabriela summarizes the rising and falling curve of alienation, connection, disconnection at BHCC in her first year:

> I come here, and I was lost because everything was new. I had to do English. I have to get a new job. Make a new life, have new friends. I get to school in September. I decide to come—to take classes at Bunker Hill Community College. But it wasn't easy. It wasn't easy because my English was so poor. I couldn't understand anything. I didn't have a lot of friends, but I make new friends. They help me a lot, friends from different backgrounds. I have American friends too. . . . Yeah, so I speak, and I understand, and I write English better than before, so I did better. Then I start a new life. I have friends. And I have make friends, to make really good friends, boys and girls. Not a lot, but I have.

> It's too much going on right now. It's too much. This school, I finish, but also, I know that I need a break. I'm so tired. Friends, because my friends, I don't have time to see my friends, so it—when I see them, if I spend time with them, like 20 minutes one day. It's important, the time we spend together.

In their study of best practices for support in community colleges, McGrath & Van Buskirk (1999) highlight the importance of achieving synchrony between the rhythm of student needs and the timing of provision of appropriate supports. Programs that successfully support students

> identify predictable points in the students' career, where they are likely to experience disappointment, discouragement, uncertainty and anxiety. They offer both cognitive and affective support by providing setting and activities designed to help students interpret their experience in positive ways. By doing so they encourage students' continued engagement with their studies. (p. 18)

At BHCC, the natural emergence of peer support was implicitly encouraged by the design of a program that brought ESOL students together in two related classes in the first semester. The potential for capitalizing on that support was lost, however, when the group formally disbanded in the spring. While in many ways the group's positive influence emerged through the natural unfolding of collegiality and friendship, these connections were nurtured by collaborative goals and simple proximity through shared coursework. Abdel, who expressed his concern at the beginning of the first semester that he would be unable to find useful help at BHCC, recalls with satisfaction the easy give and take of support with classmates who share needs and responsibilities.

> If you have any questions, you could ask them. And they really become friends, and plus. I know now, from this semester, that I could help them, too . . . In doing homework. That's the help I get from them and they can get from me.

In some ways, BHCC represents a holding environment that recognized the need for supporting peer connection at one critical transition—the move into school—but did not put conscious attention on the positive potential of group support through the second key transition the participants in our study made from the structured ESOL program into the broader, integrated school environment. In the language of Robert Kegan (1982), the peer group performed only two of three possible functions of a holding environment: It "confirmed" its members' emerging identities as adult students in an American college, and it "contradicted" their tendencies to overcommit to forms of role performance that did not suit the expression of their own agency. (In other words, the peer group helped learners develop a shared understanding of the expectations of adult students in U.S. culture, but it also introduced a healthy diversity of opinion on the goodness of any one strategy for academic success or for future goal-setting in that context.) But the disbanding of the group at the end of the first semester made it difficult for students to benefit from the third function of the holding environment: "continuity." This lack of continuity created forms of risk for the study participants that exploited their particular developmental vulnerabilities. (A developmental analysis of risk would suggest that it would take different forms for students at different developmental levels.)

Our data suggests that there are three categories of risk that the participants in our study experienced that are evidently connected to developmental level. Instrumental learners were particularly at risk for abandoning collaborative forms of learning with which they had begun to experiment and returning to rote learning characterized by repetition and a focus on skill practice. Socializing learners were particularly at risk for feelings of emotional abandonment (from peers and teachers) and sometimes retracted into isolation or returned to older relationships that were not life enhancing. Also, these learners either muted or retreated from earlier efforts to express their opinions in class. Sometimes these retreats took the form of using new skills in self-assertion to actively avoid classes or teachers who were not compliant with their own views. Self-Authoring learners were at risk for feeling devalued as knowers and for compromising their professional dreams.

It would be an exaggeration to say that the splintering of the peer group led to consistent losses in self-esteem, agency, or academic progress; most of the participants in our study characterize their second semesters and the academic year overall as successful. Instead, it would be accurate to say we observed a series of notable setbacks that might have been avoided if the peer group had had an opportunity to maintain continuity. Apart from this overall observation, what interests us especially are the forms of support learners at different levels of development took from the peer group, as well the forms of risk they encountered when the group disbanded.

Functions of the Peer Group as Holding Environment and Forms for Instrumental Learners

Learners at each developmental position are in motion psychologically from their current form of meaning making to an emergent form; developmentalists speak of adults being "embedded" in these current forms of knowing. Holding environments necessarily encourage and consolidate emerging forms of knowing even as they contradict old forms learners are outgrowing. In his description of the functions of holding environments, Kegan (1982) demonstrates that while the functions are continuous, they vary in how they confirm, contradict, and/or lend continuity to learners at different developmental positions. Here, we've adapted his original schema to reflect the particular challenges encountered and changes undergone by participants in our study. Table 7 outlines the various functions the peer group served for Instrumental learners at BHCC. It also highlights the risks students at this level encountered when holding failed.

Table 7: Instrumental Learners

Culture of Embeddedness	Function 1: Confirmation (holding on)	Function 2: Contradiction (letting go)	Function 3: Continuity (staying put for reintegration)	Forms of Risk
Role establishing and clarifying culture. Peers support role differentiation and share strategies for successful role performance.	Supports practice of tactics that enhance self-sufficiency. Confirms strategies to build competence. Provides context to experiment with role differentiation.	Recognizes and promotes emergence from embeddedness in self-sufficiency. Denies the validity of only taking one's own interests into account, requests reciprocal exchange in academic help, expects that they participate actively in role of member of group.	Peer group acts as container for student experimentation with diversity of opinion, direction, goals.	High risk: Peer group disbands during transition period.

At BHCC, Instrumental learners' descriptions of the peer group are replete with examples of helpful exchanges in which students become resources to one another academically. These students typically note that they had not expected that peers' ideas and advice would be helpful to them, yet they come to appreciate both the spirit of willingness and the tactical advice provided.

Yousef, who described himself as somewhat of a loner when the program began, talks about the importance of the group for camaraderie and practical support.

> We study with the group. Normal, you work with the group. Every time, especially in ESL, psychology. Yeah, many friends now. There is teamwork. You can ask them if you have something difficult or you have something you don't know.

> Sometimes you call each other. Yeah, we ask—if sometime you don't know something, you ask your classmate.

Like Yousef, Xuan finds positive group work a refreshing new experience. She contrasts the behavior of peers at BHCC with the "stuck up" attitude of the American students at her U.S. high school. She appreciates the cohort members for both their helpfulness and for the useful advice they provide.

> It's the people. They are very friendly here because they have been in the same situation, like they want to learn because they are new here, and they are very friendly. . . . The program, the class I am in, they are not stuck up. In the beginning, they don't talk to you because you are new, because that is the first day. So later on you get used to each other, and we talk to each other. It's fun because you feel comfortable. You feel comfortable working with them, and we can help each other with the stuff that we don't understand. My friend, his name is Tak-Jang, like when I have problems, I ask him for help, and I feel comfortable with him because I am always with him, and he can help me on to write an essay, and explain to me the questions. It's just that you feel comfortable around them. Surprising to me is that the people that I have class with, they are very friendly, and I actually study.

For both students, the novel experience of studying with friendly peers resulted in satisfying experiences in the first semester. By the end of the second semester, Yousef has refocused his efforts on independent study. Xuan has narrowed her alliances from the group as a whole to one romantic partner. Neither express as much satisfaction with the second semester as the first, and it is unclear whether Xuan plans to continue her schooling.

Functions of the Peer Group as Holding Environment and Forms of Risks in Socializing Learners

Table 8: Socializing Learners

Peer Group as Holding Environment	Function 1: Confirmation (holding on)	Function 2: Contradiction (letting go)	Function 3: Continuity (staying put for reintegration)	Forms of Risk
Mutually reciprocal one-to-one relationships. Culture of mutuality.	Acknowledges and cultures capacity for collaboration in mutually attuned interpersonal and group relationships. Orients to feelings, shared experiences, common purposes.	Recognizes and promotes emergence from embeddedness in Socializing way of knowing. Person or context that will not be fused with but still seeks, and is interested in, association. Demands the person assume responsibility for own initiatives and preferences. Asserts the others' independence.	Group members permit relationship to be relativized or placed in bigger context of ideology and psychological self-definition.	Peers leave at very time one is emerging from embeddedness.

As with the Instrumental learners, Socializing knowers often did not anticipate the role the peer group would come to play in their school experience. Socializing knowers come to emphasize more greatly the relational aspects of peer support, and take on more fully the values associated with collaborative learning. Consider, for example, the contrast of Gilles's conception in the first interview of how he learns best with his description in the final interview. In the first, Gilles emphasizes learning the meaning of new words and remembering (memorizing) information.

> I remember in my brain, and I write it down. I study like this too. And when the teacher's talking, I'm taking notes. You have to take notes for every course so I can look at it. . . . Later, or maybe tomorrow, maybe every time I want. It's harder for me to learn when I can't understand what the teacher says. That's harder for me. Sometimes ask the teacher for information. I write it down. And I put it in my mind, too. I put it in my notebook, and I put it in my mind to remember it because I don't want to lose the thing that the teacher said.

However, in the second interview, when asked what is the best way for him to learn, Gilles talks about the importance of working with others. He recognizes that this way of learning is new to him, something he has learned about and grown to value over the course of the year.

> [The best way for me to learn is to] work with a group of like students, and get some help from the learning center, from friends, from anywhere. [Before I came to Bunker Hill] I didn't know this.

Finally, in the third interview, he again stresses relationships, this time as an important source of support in his learning. However, now that the cohort has disbanded, he emphasizes the importance again of self-sufficiency. Yet his recognition that he has come to rely on himself is tinged with a kind of desultory realism; it no longer seems to be his preference to work alone.

> I guess my family and my friends [have helped me learn the most this year]. Like, even my cousin, he moved to Haiti so I just keep going to that school, if you don't go to school, then you'll never do anything. So, nothing can help you. Even your mother or your father. They cannot help you. You have to think about yourself. [When the cohort disbanded, I felt] a little sad. Yes, a little. Because I miss some of them.

Although he doesn't mention the value of working with other students in the first interview, Gilles refers to the importance of this way of working over and over in the second and third interviews. For him, the presence of peer support confirmed his emerging interpersonalism, and contradicted his older Instrumental way of knowing. Lacking a similar context for safe growth, he might struggle to consolidate this form of knowing.

Like Gilles, Tak-Jang is similar to many other participants in that he does not talk about the cohort in his first interview, but it features prominently in his second. Tak-Jang, with a fully operating Socializing way of knowing, is further along the developmental trajectory than is Gilles. Tak-Jang demonstrates this difference in his early (first interview) statements of appreciation for difference among the members of the cohort, suggesting that different ideas combine to make better ideas. He values the group's integration of differences into larger perspectives and is uncomfortable when people cling too tightly to their own ideas, not opening themselves to the ideas of others. In part, he sees group discussion as serving the accomplishment of more "correct" answers.

> Because if you have a question, just you think by yourself, you just got one mind, one thought, if you work on a lot of people in the group, you have so many minds and thoughts. They can give you more, more, more idea. Then we will do a good job, huh?

Tak-Jang values diversity of thought and relies on the group as a means to realize his preference for integrated thinking. Yet he conceives of diversity as a mutual enterprise. He has not yet imagined how persistent disagreement might be managed in service of the group's overall satisfaction with thinking together.

> But one more thing is if you have a—if everybody in this group has many idea, that's become an argument. [Then] I don't know [what to do]. I just maybe—do you know the argument is from the different idea, some people too subjective.

We do not know how Tak-Jang resolved this dilemma, as he left the country prior to our final interview. We might speculate that the loss of the cohort contributed to his decision to move on to other venues for his development, but we have no direct evidence that this is the case.

Functions of the Peer Group as Holding Environment and Forms of Risks in Self-Authoring Learners

Table 9: Self-Authoring Learners

Peer Group as Holding Environment	Function 1: Confirmation (holding on)	Function 2: Contradiction (letting go)	Function 3: Continuity (staying put for reintegration)	Forms of Risk
Typically group involvement in career, admission to public arena.	Acknowledges and cultures capacity for independence; self-definition; assumption of authority; exercise of personal enhancement, ambition or achievement; 'career' rather than job, life partner rather than helpmate.	Recognizes and promotes adults' emergence from embeddedness in independent self-definition. Will not accept mediated, non-intimate, form-subordinated relationship.	Ideological forms permit themselves to be relativized on behalf of the play between forms.	Ideological forms of support vanish (e.g., peer group loss) at very time one is separating from embeddedness.

Self-Authoring learners make use of the cohort as an enhancement to the development of self-expression and a furthering of their agency. Sonja's thoughts about the cohort trace a theme similar to that of our other participants at all developmental positions. Initially, she was struck by the differences among the students and thought they would have little basis for friendship. But by the end of the first semester, she notices a bond between them based on their international backgrounds. They seem to connect readily with one another.

> When I first came here, I thought that I don't fit very well with other people. I thought that they're very different from me. That you didn't have anything in common. Now, like two months after, I am actually going to miss all of the people because we became, I don't know, like family, kind of. And now we all going to different separate ways. It was easy because I told that to the group talking because we all somehow the same, but now it's like real. First I went and saw that we don't have anything, anything in common. And I know, what am I doing here. After, you know, two weeks I went and started to communicate with people. At the end of the semester I cried. You can ask people. We had the interview and they were talking like how do you feel. And I started to cry. I just felt huge connection. I befriended all of them.

Sonja's early fears were based in her perception that differences among students could not be readily overcome. "I thought we don't have anything in common. I thought we completely don't have anything to talk about. I was very, I was disappointed. I was shocked when I saw. I was like, oh my God." At the close of the year, she reflects back on the similarities that emerge from shared group membership, but also of affiliation with a shared identity—ESOL students.

> Yeah, I felt that ESL like labeled, and I didn't like it. Now, I finally get everything that I wanted [in the spring semester, to not be identified solely as an ESL student.] And now I'm not sure that I really want it. I mean, I know I want it, but it's, but I really like those three months that I spent. It was the group. It was, yeah, it was the group. And it was the feeling that you belong somewhere, that you belong somewhere and I was handling very well all of that. I was handling very well my grades, my relationship with teacher, my relationship with my classmates, my assignments. I had, like, motivation to do all of that because I like to come here. I felt like I belonged there. And we were all on the same, and everybody understands that on the same level. We all were ESL students.

Sonja appreciated the group, in part, because she was a member of a majority in a larger context where she struggles against minority status. She contrasts her experience in the ESOL program to those of the American students who were placed there to enhance their English skills.

> Because in psychology, we had three American students. All of them dropped, dropped out of the course. Because they were minority. They didn't fit really well. And I never thought about it before I start. I mean, I think it will be more and more easier if I can finish my college with [a cohort group] like this. It's kind of selfish, I know. Yeah, because it inspires you, you know. It feels good.

While Sonja comments on the positive feelings that come from friendships in the group, her commentary centers more on the connections the group created to a shared social status. With the loss of the cohort, Sonja, like other learners at prior developmental levels, characterizes herself as alone again. However, this understanding does not make her disconsolate; instead, she sees it as a lesson in the power of group membership. She says, "Now, I feel like I'm on my own. I'm not that afraid. I'm just became aware of that. I just became how fortunate I was to be here." In part, she recognizes that her integration into the larger BHCC community returns her to minority status. It is this social identity she regrets, although she has apparently learned strategies in the first semester to be comfortable among different peoples and to participate actively in the larger community.

> Also this program helped me to understand like the people from different cultures that I thought I could never understand. Just being with them. It came kind of naturally, I don't know. The other day I was sitting and I was thinking, oh my God, I'm having lunch with people, with a man from Haiti, with a man from South Africa, with the girl from Russia, a girl from China, talking so comfortable and so natural with them as they're my friends from my country. And, like, if somebody told me that, I would probably start to laugh. This program completely, completely—it turned out to be everything that I didn't expect it to be, in a good way.

Unlike Instrumental and Socializing knowers, Sonja does not view the lack of proximity and access to her peers from the first semester as a prohibitive threat to their friendships.

> It's different [in the second semester] because we don't talk as much. We all have, like, different responsibilities. Different, we all met some different kind of people. But I told you, every time we see each other it's, we sit, we talk. My feeling about the people are the same as from December. The only thing is that we don't see, I mean we saw each other every day because we had classes every day. Now, it's not like that. It's not because we don't want to, but we have different schedules and different, most of us work and go to school. So but I feel completely the same about all of them. The way I felt in December.

Sonja appears to have constructed a concept of friendship that does not depend directly on continuous interaction or on shared understanding. She shares this with Serge, who like Sonja is moving into Self-Authorship. In his final interview, he, too, expresses ongoing affection for and comfort with members of the cohort. Also like Sonja, Serge makes use of the group to enhance his comfort with communication with people who differ from him.

> Some of the students speak English better than me. And, you know, you see someone can speak better than you, sometimes you usually want to avoid that person, because you make a mistake, so after a couple of classes, we realize that we help each other to accomplish this, so we help each other in the class. We still see each other, talk to each other, still have affection for each other. I think it was a good experience when you have a class that understands you. Not to say that because everybody is from another country, but I think it's because everybody understands that we need to help each other. So they were trying to see if they can be, how can I say it, at least they can be a little close and we can speak each other and we can have a little practice ourselves so whenever we speak to someone else, we can communicate. That's what we usually do, we sit down, we talk and trying to be in the culture of everyone.

In his third interview, Serge recounts all of the help he has gotten from people over the year: from his teachers, tutors, computers, the learning center, his girlfriend, and others in his cohort. However, he seems to use these various supports in service of the enhancement of his own capacity to act on his own behalf. He tells us he has arrived at the point where he no longer is in need of such supports, while still appreciating them. In that sense, he seems to have used all these supports as scaffolding toward becoming more independent. On reflection, if he had to "restart the year," he tells us "I would study by myself." Like other learners, it sounds as if Serge retreats from collaborative learning. Serge, however, had expressed an interest in group learning from the beginning of the year. Here, he seems to want to try something new for him, to "try to be more independent." Serge seems to be emphasizing the importance of taking charge of his own learning by making sure he has the skills, knowledge, strategies, and resources available to educate himself and get the necessary help where and when he requires it. It is interesting to speculate on how Serge would have conceived of the potential for group support had the cohort remained in place. Perhaps he would have found other uses for group support to his own development. Instead, like Sonja, he in effect "cuts his losses" of the cohort experience without evident personal struggle. What he may have relinquished without awareness are learning opportunities presented by the group that would have challenged him to grow in new ways toward interdependent forms of thinking.

At BHCC, the combination of teacher and peer supports proved, while in place, to be both flexible and responsive to the learners' overall needs. The range of opportunities for students to increase their learning by accessing appropriate supports was enhanced by the absence of a single-minded approach to teaching or by too much uniformity in thought and practice among peers. Still, the vulnerabilities the learners in our study expressed and experienced are consequences of supports retrieved too soon. The program overall might consider finding ways to carry over the positive environment they create so consciously in the fall to later student experiences.

SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

A developmental analysis of learners' experiences frames both the possibilities and constraints intrinsic to any educational experience for a learner at a particular level. As with any framework, the focus for analysis reveals the primary commitments of the theory and its aims for action. Developmental theories of education are primarily committed to making systematic sense of predictable change and supporting wholesome change in appropriate ways. While the forms of transition the participants in our study encounter are predictable, the common ways in which they come to make sense of them are not. The participants in our study are highly diverse; their cultural and personal histories would suggest there would be more difference than similarity in their aims, ideals, and motivations for schooling. Instead, we see a kind of regularity to their interests and expressions of their hopes that can be interpreted somewhat successfully by applying a theory of consciousness development.

It has been our implicit recommendation throughout that teachers and program designers might benefit from learning to look at their students' responses to challenging transitions through a developmental lens. Coming to recognize the common developmental positions underlying particular expressions of participants' experiences at BHCC would allow program leaders greater flexibility in their responses to learners' difficulties and successes. That recognition may also shape the ways in which teachers introduce or emphasize particular skills and ideas. And it might provide a framework for evaluation that incorporates the learner's perspective among the more typical measures of literacy or exhortations on behalf of progressive schooling. As an analytic tool, the theory opens up an exploration of aspects of participants' experience that other frameworks may obscure. These aspects include, at least, an attention to the process of how participants make sense of program experience, an awareness of the possible forms the program can take on for learners at different developmental levels, and an assessment of program demands from the point of view of the timely needs of the learner. The adult learners who participated in our research have helped expand our understanding of the forms of transition both common and necessary if students are to be successful, in their terms, in settings such as BHCC.

Practical ends are sometimes accomplished through transformational means. Growth can be inordinately pragmatic in that it may allow for ready access to skills that previously escaped our best efforts. By emphasizing the forms of growth that learners undergo and the types of support that scaffold them, we can attend to the immediate agenda learners put forward to advance their socioeconomic opportunities while also enhancing their capacity to envision greater goals for themselves than they originally conceived. In this way, agency is enhanced, and barriers to personal enhancement may be eventually dissolved.

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In our final meeting with Gilles, he seems a bit tired. Looking back on the year, he tells us that he learned a lot but that learning was often hard. He values his teachers, whom he describes as friendly and supportive. He also appreciates the opportunities he had in the ESOL program to make new friends and work with other students. "This was the best thing. I can learn faster when I work with good people." Now, Gilles tells us that he misses these friends and feels a little sad that they no longer to take classes together. He has not been able to complete all his classes successfully, taking an incomplete in English during the second semester. But he plans to continue at Bunker Hill and maintains a sense of belief in his abilities. "I just have to finish my college, that's it," he says. "I think of my family. I have a good family."

Sonja also has many memories of her year at Bunker Hill. Like Gilles, she describes close and supportive friendships she made and tells us how she cried at the end of the first semester because of the strong connections she felt with the other students in her program. She also misses studying with these students and with her first teachers who taught her so much and believed in her, even when she doubted herself. Although the second semester posed challenges for Sonja, particularly in math, she was able to complete her courses successfully. She talks about the differences she now sees in herself. "I think I know more English. I'm more confident. Now, when I have to deal with American students, I'm not afraid of them anymore. I think I'm more organized now than I used to be. I am a different kind of student. I think that I'm more responsible student. Maybe that comes with the age. I'm more mature now and I'm taking everything more seriously." Sonja continues to set hopeful goals for her future, planning to transfer, get her bachelor's degree, and pursue her dream *of working in radio broadcasting. "Always hope for the best," she tells us. "Hope is the last to die. And then hope give me the strength to actually do it."*

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CHAPTER FIVE

"Becoming What I Really Am": Stories of Self-definition and Self-expansion in an Even Start ABE/ESOL Family Literacy Program: A Developmental Perspective

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I. INTRODUCTION

Jean

Jean is an American woman in her mid-30s and the mother of many children who span a range of ages. Shy and rather self-effacing, Jean has a face that lights up and a voice that fills with passion, conviction, and pride as she tells us how being an ABE student in the Even Start family literacy program has changed her and helped her to be the parent and person she wants to be.

> I wanted to go back to school and be able to learn the things that I didn't know how to do. . . . Well before my kids used to ask me to help them with reading and stuff and it was very difficult for me because I didn't understand what they were doing so it made me feel bad about myself of not helping them. But when I started here, I learned to read better and now I actually can sit down and really help them and feel good about myself to be able to help them. . . . At first I didn't think I could learn new things, then, I think now I can learn anything . . . Right now I feel good knowing that I can do some of the stuff that I couldn't do before.

Felicia

Felicia is a warm and energetic ESOL student and the mother of two young children. Originally from South America, Felicia describes what participating in the Even Start program has meant to her.

> . . . when I came here and I didn't speak English. I'm depend for my husband . . . I can't communicate with the people. . . . Yes and I can't help my children . . . my son, he speak English , and he ask me some, some question in English. And I can't help him . . . Because I didn't understand, I'm feeling too bad, dispirited . . . I need to know how they really feel inside and my children they, understand how I feel. . . . in my country we don't have really that help for how we can help our children, how we can understand them, but you know, over here [at Even Start] we have a lot of conversation about that. And now I'm feel success. . . . I can explain my children's want . . . I can do more things . . . Yeah, and now I can ask for something, and I receive something . . . I'm professional in my country. And when I came here I wasn't nothing. Why? My English, my kids. So the communication, that is really important. That's my goal now—I want to learn for complete English for read, write everything, so I really can do what I'm really like to do, what I really am.

Ho

Ho is parenting a preschooler. He is from Southeast Asia and is in his twenties. As he explains, Even Start has been a kind of educationally corrective experience.

> . . . there's a time . . . I'd seen kids go to school and then I feel like I'm missing in some point . . . and then I feel left out for I couldn't have whatever people do. Like I couldn't go to school like other people and then it would make me feel ashamed in some point or guilty . . . and then [I saw] this program . . . I used to be a shy person, but now, I read more, I talk to people more, join more activity. . . . I just have better self-esteem, I guess. Patience for everything . . . so my plan was got it [a GED] then perhaps I can go full time college. . . . I know that now my English improved a lot . . . and speaking, pronunciations, compared to a couple of years ago . . . and writing which I love mostly now . . . just start loving school this past year.

Linn

Soft-spoken Linn tells us about her hopes for herself and the value she derives from participating in Even Start. From Asia, and now mothering two young children, Linn characterizes her experience at Even Start this way.

> I have to study English because I have been here, in the U.S.A., almost nine years, but most of that time, I had to stay home with my children. So I didn't have much chance to speak with other American people and to study English. . . . Most of the time inside of me I want to do something to improve my life. But this time I am very happy with this program. It makes me happy. I want, I think I can do something. . . . When I first came to Even Start my goal was learning only English. After take the class I think this class give us not only English but other things. We read a lot in the class. When I read many kind of articles, many kind of other things sometimes it give me a more high level English but I can accept some information and some knowledge about other things . . . so to learn again is more exciting to me. . . . To get another new idea, to learn new things is happy with me . . . to know new something . . . If it makes my mind more wide.

****

The notions of self-definition and redefinition expressed in the students' excerpts which begin in this chapter, underscore the salience this particular Even Start family literacy program has had for the 15 ESOL and ABE students we interviewed, whose lives and concerns have been the focus of our thinking for more than two years. These themes of self-creation, re-creation—of "becoming somebody"—relate to the Even Start students' perceived changes in their social identities as learners and parents. In our view, the evolving perceptions of agency and authority that accompanied these changes linked to and were importantly contoured by their development.

This chapter is a focused portrait of the multiple forms the learners' development and experiences of self-definition and self-expansion took as they participated in a family literacy program.

It explores how the context of the Even Start family literacy program, for the majority of the students, provided a community of confirmation and recognition supporting these students' efforts of self-definition and movement toward their goals for themselves and their children. But this chapter is also the story about the challenges these students face, both within the culture at large and within the learning environment of Even Start itself. It is also the story of how both a developmental perspective on adult education and a developmental theory of adult growth and self-expansion can help *us* expand our awareness of the ways educators and program designers may help adult literacy learners attain their goals and hopes.

This chapter considers the meaning and meaningfulness of family literacy learning from the perspectives of the students. We hope that we have faithfully reported what they told us was important and helpful to their learning. We hope that we have amply described the multiple ways they were encouraged and demonstrated personal courage as they reached out toward their aspirations and dreams.

Background on the Research Setting

Our study took place in an Even Start ESOL/ABE Family Literacy Program located in Massachusetts. We selected this particular program as one of our research sites because of its longstanding reputation for excellence and its integrated instructional approach of theme-based and ABE/ESOL skill learning and its strengths-focused, learner-centered developmental parenting curriculum. The instructional approach in the preschool class is also developmentally based and child centered. The Even Start program we researched offers a comprehensive component model of family literacy that is also intergenerational in nature. The Even Start program describes itself as serving

> up to thirty families by providing adult education (one intermediate-level ESOL class, one intermediate/Pre-GED ABE class and basic computer instruction), a preschool class for up to fifteen children 2.9 to kindergarten age . . . parent-and-child time, a parent discussion/support group, and weekly home visits. The program meets five mornings a week from 9 to 12 [at a local school]. ("Program Materials," 1996)

The adult ESOL/ABE components, parenting curriculum, parent-and-child-time, and preschool class curriculum are all coordinated and flexibly implemented. The teachers collaborate to ensure that the various classroom materials amplify and build upon each other. The ABE/ESOL curriculum is "based loosely on a series of scope and sequence charts of skills in the areas of conversation, grammar, writing, reading comprehension, spelling, vocabulary, word attack skills, survival skills, math, and content area knowledge" ("Program Materials," 1996). However, the ABE/ESOL curriculum also consistently includes topics that arise from parents' concerns, topics that link to the parenting curriculum or emanate from aspects of the students' ethnic background or home country history or geography. The parenting curriculum and the early childhood component likewise draw from the parents' and children's interests.

The goals of the Even Start program are multiple. These include helping students prepare for employment, helping students advocate for their children and themselves, supporting students' involvement in their children's education, helping students develop their own and their children's self-confidence, and helping students gain ABE and ESOL education ("Program Materials," 1996).

The ABE and ESOL classroom and preschool educators are highly experienced and well trained. Three thoughtful, dedicated educators (an ABE co-coordinator, ESOL teacher, and early childhood co-coordinator) are the nucleus of the program (although there are additional staff, such as a computer teacher, two preschool teachers, interns, ABE/ESOL volunteers, home visitors, clerical support staff, and several consultants). While each woman heads a different classroom and two of the three share an administrative role, the three women coordinate their educational practices and share a vision of working with student strengths. These women also strive to create and build a classroom community atmosphere that embraces and celebrates the diversity of its students. Within the ABE and ESOL classes, the teachers have a goal setting and evaluation system that enlists student participation in these processes by inviting them to set their learning goals and periodically evaluate their own progress.

In our last interview, held jointly with the ABE teacher (who is the ABE co-coordinator) and the early childhood co-coordinator (who is in the preschool half-time), the ABE classroom teacher articulated the collaborative educational vision.

> And I think the other thing that is interesting about early childhood and adult ed—and I had never quite thought about it this way, that [they] are on each end of the K–12, and have some similarities . . . **We are looking at the children individually and the parents individually from their strengths and helping them recognize those strengths, honor those strengths, and then build on them.** Because some family literacy programs *do* operate off a deficit model. You know, "oh, these poor families, you know, we've got to break this cycle of illiteracy. And these poor parents need to know about budgets and discipline," and you come in with a canned program. I think it's been very interesting to hear [the early childhood co-coordinator] . . . talk about her curriculum, her early childhood curriculum being developmental, child centered. You know, my curriculum . . . I mean I don't use the word developmental but I use the comparable word for adults. **Where you take a person where they are in their lives. That is developmental. You know, you start with where they are.** The experience they are having right now, and you use that for a curriculum and for setting up goals. And it's learning centered certainly . . . And there are comparable things . . . we talked about when we were talking about philosophies. **So, I think in terms of vision, I think we want the parents to discover their own strengths, to find out what they need, and help them meet those needs, educational needs, . . . Because I think we want, as it says in our mission statement . . . or the definition of family literacy, . . . to help families meet their full personal, economic, social, and academic potential.**

The early childhood co-coordinator added:

> I think building on strengths is really true . . . And I think that goes into the community as well . . . we started a collaborative on family literacy. And it's not coming in saying, "this is family literacy, we think you should do it." It's like . . . "okay, let's build on what you do and what you can bring to the group and what we can maybe give you to help support it" . . . and **it's listening to somebody else.** It's the same thing that we do between each other. It's the same thing that we do with

> the parents. Let's listen and work it out. **I'm not going to come in and say**, you know, **"we should do it this way, or we have to do it this way." So there's a real give and take and a learning process.**

Learners also report on this give and take. In their interviews (and we discuss this more fully later), several students comment on program and teacher flexibility that seems salient to their enjoyment and persistence in the program. This flexibility may be especially important given the program's policy of open enrollment and the fact that some students do stop out of the classes and return at a later time. Nevertheless, a strong group ethic seems to prevail within each class and across the program.

One of the unique aspects of this Even Start family literacy program is the diversity and cultural richness of the participating families. The students who joined our study represented 11 different countries. They range in age from 22 to 44 and have diverse prior educational and work histories. Their number of years living in the U.S. and socioeconomic status vary as well. Several of the students in our study come from war-torn countries and were unable to complete their secondary education because of political unrest and upheaval within their country of origin. For a more complete account of the learners' background information, see Table 1.

Table 1: Background Information of Even Start Participants

Name	Gender	Age	Years in U.S.	Region of Origin	ABE/ ESOL	SOI Time 1	SOI Time 2	Time in Program	Additional Information
Yvette	F	33	8	Caribbean	ESOL	2/3	3/2	2 years	Has 2 children. Completed 9th grade. Not working.
Trudie	F	35	17	Caribbean	ABE	2/3•	3/2	5 months	Has 4 children. Completed 10th grade. Working.
Jean	F	29	29	United States	ABE	3/2	3/2	2 years	Has 6 children. Completed 10th grade. Not working.
Pamela	F	38	10	Central America	ESOL	3/2	3/2	3 years Stopped out.	Has 4 children. Completed 3rd grade.
Indira	F	33	1	sub-Sahara	ESOL	3(2)	3(2)	3 months	Has 2 children. Completed high school. Not working.
Anna	F	40	13	Caribbean	ABE	3	3	3 years	Has 3 children. Completed high school. Not working.
Sarita	F	27	2	Asia	ESOL	3	3	9 months	Has 1 child. Completed 11th grade. Not working.
Felicia	F	25	3	South America	ESOL	3	3	8 months	Has 2 children. Completed college + 2 professional training.
Raquelle	F	37	14	Caribbean	ABE	3	3	10 months	Has 1 child. Completed 8th grade. Working.
Elena	F	30	3 mos.	Caribbean	ABE	3	3•	2 months	Has two children. Completed college + graduate training. Not working.

• Trudie's SOI score Time 1 represents a range of 2/3-3/2. It was difficult to ascertain a more discrete score.

• Elena's SOI score Time 2 represents a range of 3-3(4). It was difficult to ascertain a more discrete score.

(Table 1 Continued)

Name	Gender	Age	Years in U.S.	Region of Origin	ABE/ ESOL	SOI Time 1	SOI Time 2	Time in Program	Additional Information
Linn	F	34	9	Asia	ABE	3/4	3/4	2 months	Has 2 children. Completed college + professional training. Not working.
Ahara	F	37	8	sub-Sahara	ESOL	3/4	3/4	4 1/2 years	Has 2 children.
Ho	M	22	9	Asia	ABE	3/4	3/4	4 months	Has 1 child. Completed 10th grade. Working
Dalia	F	31	13	Caribbean	ABE	4	4	1 year	Has 5 children. Nearly completed high school + 2 years adult education.
Hamid	M	44	15	sub-Sahara	ABE	4	4	5 years	Has 9 children. Completed 5th grade. Working.

We first met the Even Start ABE and ESOL students in September 1998, at which time there were 12 ABE students and nine ESOL learners who agreed to participate in our research study. Over the course of 10 months, during which we interviewed the students on three separate occasions, six students dropped out or transferred from the program and left the study, bringing the sample size of participants who we were able to follow in our study down to fifteen individuals (nine ABE and six ESOL students). Of the 15 who stayed in the study, one left the program and two transferred to other literacy centers over the course of the three data collection periods. We were, however, able to complete their final interviews. (See Chapter Two for a complete description of the research methods and research instruments used in the study).

In comparing the Even Start students to those of the other two research sites, two features stand out as unique: the Even Start learners are all parents and most are in their early thirties. In contrast, the sample of community college students we interviewed were childless and primarily in their mid-20s. While many of the workplace site literacy students also had families, they were, on average, older than the Even Start learners. The fact that the learners were actively engaged in the expansion of their roles as both adult learners and parents was an important consideration in selecting this Even Start research setting.

Challenges for Teachers and Challenges for Researchers

As we read and reread the narratives of the learners in our study, we at times found ourselves grappling with issues linked to what ESOL teachers describe as the multilevels in the classroom (Burt, 1997). Our research team frequently found ourselves following and intrigued by the distinct contouring of the multiple differences that abounded within and across the two classes (the ESOL and ABE) of students we interviewed.

As we noted, while most of the immigrant students in the ESOL class had not worked in their home country, several had previously held jobs, and one student had trained for and worked in a professional career in business. In the ABE class, a number of students had previously worked in their home country, and several had received college training for their careers. Thus, another difference we wondered about was the students' varying level of education across the classes. Additionally, several ABE students described their previous school histories as negative and confidence robbing. We also noted differences in their SES level (when living in their home country), as well as differences in the number and ages of their children. All but one of the students in this study was an immigrant. We wondered about these distinct individual features of the learners both within each class and across the two literacy classes we interviewed for our study. We wondered, as well, about the possibly different atmospheres within the ABE and ESOL classes, since, as we explained, they were taught by two different literacy educators, despite the fact the teachers themselves depict their educational philosophies as quite similar. Our concerns and questions related to how these differences across and within the classes might influence or have bearing on the students' perception of their education, their instructional preferences, and views of and hopes for themselves as learners.

In our view, differences in ethnicity and cultural background as well as level of English language fluency are no small matter. As researchers and developmental psychologists who are particularly interested in ways that individuals constitute meaning, we continuously asked ourselves how these mostly immigrant students from 11 countries construed their purposes for entering the ABE/ESOL program, their expectations for their teachers, and their goals for themselves as students and parents. We told ourselves we would not be surprised if we found 15 different and distinct responses to our questions. Surprisingly, and to a greater extent than some of us expected, patterns of similarity in their construals did emerge (although many differences coexisted within these narratives). Thus, in this chapter, we share and focus our analysis and interpretations of meaning on the students' stories of commonalities we discerned. We also realize that researchers with a different orientation might choose to focus on the disparate, distinct, and diverse elements of the participants' backgrounds and might therefore recount a different story about the meaning and purpose of education in the lives of these literacy learners. We do not assume that our interpretation and analysis of the data is the or their whole story. Rather, we see our contribution as *one way in* to thinking about and understanding the various personal meanings these diverse students bring to their experience in their literacy classes. We imagine and hope that this approach of surfacing the regularities across the students' experiences is both a powerful and helpful way of joining what so many literacy researchers and practitioners have noted as an absence of students' own accounts of their views of the functions, purposes, and practices of literacy (Auerbach,1997; Gadsden, 1994, 1996, Lytle, 1991; Taylor, 1997).

British social anthropologist Brian Street suggests that educators need to bring an anthropologist's viewpoint to their work in ABE/ESOL literacy education. By this, he means that an anthropologist's perspective on cultural differences, beliefs, and practices would serve to help literacy educators become more sensitive and responsive to the differing ways literacy learners seem to conceive of the functions, purposes, and practices of literacy in their lives. In his words, "teachers need to become cultural anthropologists, alert to signs of difference and to where students are coming from" (Street, p. 209, cited in D. Taylor, 1997). Street goes on to say, "all learners, 'mainstream' as well as minority and those from diverse cultural backgrounds, carry with them cultural assumptions about what and how they are learning and about what is appropriate" (ibid.). In Street's view (p. 209), educators need to recognize that learners from non-mainstream backgrounds "do not come *tabula rasa* to the education system, that they come bringing trails of their own cultural heritage and that this is frequently why they have difficulty 'seeing' what the mainstream teacher takes for granted." Street (cited in Taylor, 1997, p. 209) believes that some of teachers' frustrations with students' "inability . . . to do things that seem straightforward enough" link to the teachers' lack of awareness of these cultural differences. To correct for this "cultural insensitivity," Street and other literacy researchers (Auerbach, 1997; Gadsden, 1994, 1997; Lytle, 1991; Taylor, 1997) urge listening to what the learners themselves have to say.

We join these researchers in their focus on the importance and primacy of listening to what learners themselves say are their beliefs about the value of literacy. We also agree that learners (and here we include mainstream, minority, or immigrant students) do not enter any ABE or ESOL program *tabula rasa,* but rather, as we and other developmentally minded educators suggest (Belenky et al., 1986; Daloz, 1986, Kegan, 1982, 1994; Perry, 1970; Weathersby, 1976), come to their educational endeavors with their own important, valuable, and guiding conceptions of the functions, purposes, and practices of literacy in their lives. And while we agree that culture, race, and ethnicity are critical and extremely influential shaping forces upon learners' literacy beliefs, we suggest that another important, powerful organizing feature undergirding these differences may link to one's way of knowing or, as we will discuss next, to a person's orderly system of meaning organization which we believe shapes these beliefs as well. Although we offer this different way of understanding the preferences and meanings learners bring to their literacy endeavors, we see our developmental perspective as compatible with an anthropological-cultural approach to interpreting learner beliefs and the meanings and purposes of literacy in their lives. Thus, we find ourselves inviting our readers to don a different "theoretical persona" and to take up a different journey into the stories these students tell about their lives, one that wends its way through the lens of development.

Developmental Perspectives on the Self, Education, and Parenting

Although several explanations of our developmental perspective appear elsewhere in this monograph (see, for example, Chapters Three or Four), we now take the time to review and emphasize several key features of our developmental theory that seem particularly relevant to our understanding of the Even Start learners' experiences.

Foundational to our constructive-developmental framework are the twin ideas that human beings persistently strive to interpret, bring coherence to, and make meaning of experience *and* that the very "activity of making-meaning is the fundamental motion of personality" (Kegan, 1982, p.15). We are, in other words, indomitable meaning-makers who develop through the activity of constructing the world. Although these constructions—the meanings we make—might seem random or idiosyncratic, our developmental framework suggests that they are not. According to constructive-developmental theory, our meaning-making is filtered through a way of knowing that entails its own consistent, coherent, and qualitatively distinct and increasingly complex inner logic. Moreover, constructive-developmentalists believe that a given way of knowing or logic shapes a person's thoughts, emotions, and understanding of herself in relation to others. To this end, researchers whose work flows from the constructive-developmental tradition have applied its basic theoretical principles and ideas to the development of self across a variety of domains, including self as learner and parent (Belenky et al., 1986; Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1994; Newberger, 1980; Perry, 1970). Self-theorists (Epstein 1991; Harter, 1999) whose focus is the development of self-concept apply constructive-developmental principles to suggest that individuals actively construct theories of self which evolve and become more complex over time. They believe that these self-theories, also bound by developmental logics, shape how a person perceives and evaluates herself, framing the portrait she paints of who she is—her identity. In sum, developmental psychologists, researchers, and theorists all link the process of development and perceptions of self and self-agency both to the activity of constructing meaning and to the forms these constructions take. To this end, building upon the notion that one's social identity is intimately connected to the form and activity of meaning-making, we assert that when a person is consistently unable to express her made meanings or enact her sense of identity defined by her governing logic, her very self may be put at risk.

Constructive-Developmental Logics—Ways of Knowing

Earlier in this monograph we described the three most common forms of constructing meaning (or ways of knowing) in adulthood: the Instrumental way of knowing, the Socializing way of knowing, and the Self-Authoring way of knowing. For a fuller explication of these ways of knowing we refer the reader to Chapter Three. Here we supply a quick description of the ways these logics shape the *form* of one's identity, guiding the construction of one's social role and, in particular, one's view of self and other. Into our conception of "other," we implicitly fold in teachers, peers, children, intimate others, and countries' or programs' cultural values.

The essence of the Instrumental knower's relation to an[other] is as follows:

> As a self subject to my needs, wishes and interests, I relate to another person by viewing his/her needs, wishes and interests in terms of the possible [practical] consequences for my world view. Essentially I know you in knowing whether who or what you are will help or hinder me in my effort to live my needs, action-oriented goals, plans or interests. (Lahey, et al., 1988, p. 98)

The essence of the Socializing knower's relation to an[other] is as follows:

> The triumph of the [Socializing] mind is the new ways the other's point of view matters to us. . . . The other's point of view matters to us intrinsically, not just extrinsically as a means of satisfying our more egocentric purposes (Kegan, 1994, p.126) . . . when the [Socializing way of knowing] dominates our meaning making, what we **should** feel is what we **do** feel, what we **should** value, is what we **do** value and what we **should** want is want we **do** want. (Kegan, 1994, p. 275)

The essence of the Self-Authoring knower's relation to an[other] and another's ideals, values, and evaluations is as follows:

> Evolution between [the Socializing way of knowing and Self-Authoring way of knowing] is the story of gradually separating internalized points of view from their original sources in others and making the self itself a coherent system for their generation and correlation (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 51). This evolution . . . brings into being an "I" that has, rather than is, its relationships. [This way of knowing's] strength is its capacity for self-regulation, its capacity to sustain itself, to parent itself, to name itself—its autonomy. (Kegan, 1982, p. 223)

Developmental Mechanisms

One way to conceive of these different ways of knowing is to see them as different perspectives of the self (and other) that help direct both an individual's perception and location of personal authority and agency (a trajectory that becomes increasingly internal and self-directed over time). According to constructive-developmental theory, we characteristically become identified with the particular meaning system or way of knowing that we create and, in turn, creates us.[1] Thus, we are consistently engaged in the process of preserving and defending the logics that filter our perceptions of our selves, our authority and our agency. This tendency to preserve our current way of knowing in the face of being presented with new and novel experiences or information links to the process of assimilation, one of the key developmental mechanisms described by Piaget (1952). Assimilation, then, is the developmental process of taking in and interpreting information or experience according to our existing logic. British social scientist Peter Marris (1974, p. 9), who writes on the processes of personal and social change, cites the thinking of developmental psychologist John Flavell (1963, p. 50) in describing what they both characterize as the "conservative impulse" undergirding the making of meaning.

> Assimilation is by its very nature conservative, in the sense that its primary function is to make the unfamiliar familiar, to reduce the new to the old. A new assimilatory structure must always be some variant of the last one acquired and it is this which insures both the gradualness and continuity of intellectual [and, we would add, self] development.

As new information is interpreted through a given way of knowing, there may still be a consolidation or elaboration of one's thinking. When the new or the novel can be interpreted through a given logic, the information or experience may be similar enough to approximate one's ways of knowing and still expand one's understanding. However, should the new or the novel not approximate our existing way of interpreting it, we may create a new meaning framework (or way of knowing) through which we can interpret the information, or we may substantially modify an existing way of knowing so we can interpret the information. This process of creating or modifying a new meaning framework is what Piaget called accommodation.[2] Simply put, growth through these distinct ways of knowing relates to the appropriate support for and moderate challenge to an individual's current way of knowing so he may continue to coherently interpret and make sense of his psychosocial surround and build upon his personal agency. We more fully consider what constitutes appropriate support or challenge to a given way of knowing later in this chapter.

In our study, we note that the Even Start students we interviewed depicted life situations and circumstances of acculturation that presented a variety of challenges to their way of knowing and to their demonstrations of personal authority and perceived agency. In a very few instances, these challenges promoted shifts in their interpretive logic or slight changes to the very structure of their given way of knowing. In most instances, challenges and the subsequent educational supports the learners found through the context of the Even Start program fostered changes in what we call the

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[1] However, we note that for a vast majority, these meaning systems will evolve and transform gradually over time.

[2] In this description of assimilation and accommodation we do not mean to suggest that such modifications or changes to one's way of knowing are instantaneous; rather we see these changes as gradual, incremental, and evolving.

contents of their knowing. We do, however, understand these content changes as important to the consolidation and elaboration of their meaning-making and to their growth as learners, parents, and people. In other words, these changes are significant to the further expansion of their social identities.

Developmental Perspectives on Education and Parenting

Developmental educators are fascinated by and focused on teaching and learning issues, which ultimately relate to the processes of assimilation and accommodation. That is, developmental educators regularly absorb themselves with and ask questions about how much a teacher or a course curriculum should explicitly challenge a student's given way of knowing in order to promote learning and/or growth toward a more complex way of knowing (Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1994; Lasker, 1975; Perry, 1970; Tinberg & Weisberger, 1998; Weathersby, 1976). Developmental educators are also concerned with how a learner's way of knowing may shape her expectations for learning, including her educational goals, instructional preferences, view of her own and her teacher's responsibilities, and understanding of the value of education and even the origins of knowledge. Various theorists have suggested related models of learners' conceptions of the nature and origins of knowledge and the evolution of students' understanding of themselves as knowers. In the table below (Portnow, Popp, Broderick, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 1998), we offer a synthesis of some of these ideas and draw heavily from the work of Rita Weathersby (1976) and Harry Lasker (1975), two groundbreaking educators and researchers who imaginatively integrate dynamics of self-development with learner perspectives on adult education and the teaching and learning process.

Table 2: Learners' Understanding of Education

Learners' Understanding of Education

Instrumental Ways of Knowing

- "What's in it for me?"
- Knowledge is a kind of "possession," an accumulation of skills, facts, and actions that yield solutions; a means to an end.
    - -You "get it" and then you "have it."
- Knowledge is right or wrong.
- Knowledge comes from external authority which tells you the right skills, facts, and rules you need to produce the results to get what you want.
- Knowledge helps one meet one's own concrete needs and goals, and obtain instrumental outcomes.
- Education is to get X.

Socializing Ways of Knowing

- "What do you think I should know?"
- Knowledge is general information that one should know for the required social roles and to meet expectations of teachers/authorities. Knowledge is equated with objective truth.
- Knowledge comes from higher authorities and experts who hand down truth and understanding. Authorities and experts are the source of the legitimate knowledge and informed opinions.
- Knowledge helps one to meet cultural and social expectations, gain acceptance, and enter into social roles and feel a sense of belonging.
- Education is to be X.

Self-Authoring Ways of Knowing

- "What do I want to know? What is important to me to keep learning and growing?"
- Knowledge is understood as a construction, truth, a matter of context. Bodies of knowledge and theories are seen as models for interpreting and analyzing experience.
- Knowledge comes from one's interpretation and evaluation of standards, values, perceptions, deductions, and predictions. Knowledge comes from a self-generated curiosity and sense of responsibility for one's own learning.
- Knowledge helps to enrich one's life, to achieve a greater competence according to one's own standards, to deepen one's understanding of self and world; to participate in the improvement of society.
- Education is to become X.

Adapted from R. Weathersby, A Synthesis of Research and Theory on Adult Development: Its Implications for Adult Learning and Postsecondary Education, 1976, pp.88-89.

As this table suggests, learners' conceptions of themselves as knowers and their understanding of the nature and source of knowledge follows a trajectory of increasing complexity of thought. At the Instrumental way of knowing, knowledge is initially conceived as skills or facts and understood in rather dualistic, either/or ways. Yet, these conceptions evolve as one's way of knowing becomes more complex over time so that the Self-Authoring knower comes to understand that knowledge itself is contextual and a construction. Knowledge is no longer viewed primarily as a means to attain an instrumental set of goals but is perceived as a way to enrich one's life, to deepen self-understanding and self-discovery and is valuable for shaping one's own destiny.

Developmental approaches to parent education (which we admit seem to be a decidedly Western orientation) likewise trace a trajectory of evolving complexity of thought that focus on the ways parents are increasingly aware of and able to take the child's perspective and put themselves in the child's shoes, eventually coming to see the child as "a complex and changing psychological self-system" where parent–child interactions are understood as being mutually influential to the growth of each party.

Developmentally driven conceptions of parental awareness (Newberger, 1980) have implications for the ways that parents interpret their children's needs, see themselves as authorities, and conceive of the nature of the child. Here, too, these "levels of parental awareness" presume that individuals bound by a more Instrumental way of knowing will have a more concrete orientation toward their own and their children's needs. Instrumentally-oriented parents might find it difficult to put themselves in the shoes of their children and may understand proper discipline as ensuring their children do what they say, follow the rules, and meet parental needs. At the Socializing way of knowing, a parent would characteristically internalize her child's perspective and might understand and enact discipline approaches and a view of the nature of the child that are derived through culturally prescribed values and practices. At a more Self-Authoring way of knowing, a parent would see herself as creator and generator of her parenting values which both take into consideration the child's internal psychological perspective and her own. These values derive from the individual's superordinate theory of parenting which directs the parent's understanding of discipline and her view of children's development (Kegan, 1994). The table below summarizes and is adapted from Newberger's (1980) "Levels of Parental Awareness Scale," a scale that links to the way individuals construe their parental role and the parent-child relationship.

Table 3: Newberger's Levels of Parental Awareness

Levels of Parental Awareness

[particular issue is understanding of the child in relation to parental role]

Egoistic orientation [the Instrumental way of knowing]
The parent understands the child as a projection of his or her own experience, and the parental role is organized around parental wants and needs.

Conventional orientation [the Socializing way of knowing]
The child is understood in terms of externally derived (tradition, culture, authority) definitions and explanations of children. The parent orients to the internalization of the child's perspective and the parental role is organized around socially defined notions of correct practices and responsibilities.

Subjective-individualistic orientation [growing toward Self-Authorship]
The child is viewed as a unique individual who is understood through the parent–child relationship rather than solely through external definitions of children. The parental role is organized around identifying and meeting the needs of this child rather than as the fulfillment of predetermined culturally prescribed role obligations only.

Interactional orientation [the Self-Authoring way of knowing]
The parent understands the child as a complex and changing psychological self-system. The parent, as well as the child, grows in his/her role and the parent recognizes that the relationship and the role are built not only on meeting the child's needs but also on finding ways of balancing his or her own needs and the child's so that each can be responsibly met.

Adapted from Carolyn Newberger's Parental Awareness Scale from "The Cognitive Structure of Parenthood: Designing a Descriptive Measure," New Directions for Child Development, 7, 1980.

We believe that developmental perspectives on parental role construal may be helpful to parenting educators, or, in this case, family literacy practitioners, because such frameworks provide ways to understand what may be the developmentally driven difficulties and/or strengths parents face in meeting cultural and/or curricular expectations set for them in their roles as parents. In understanding the ways parents conceptualize the parent–child relationship, educators may interpret parental behavior as emanating not from noncompliant, selfish, traditional, or even self-righteous attitudes but as the result of the ways parents understand and make sense of themselves, their roles as parents, and their world. In short, we see parenting behavior and attitudes as reflective of and influenced by an individual's development, or way of knowing. Later in this chapter, we take up the way the Even Start students' developmental positions or ways of knowing affect their response to and incorporation of the Even Start parenting curriculum and the implications this has for their notions of teaching, disciplining, and interacting with their children.

In the next section of this chapter, we use a developmental perspective as an analytical tool through which to learn about and listen to the challenges the students in our study describe as important to their reasons for enrolling in the Even Start program and for seeking ABE and ESOL education within the context of a family literacy program. In this section, we explore the ways their systems of meaning organization direct their goals for learning and their understandings of the teaching and learning enterprise. We also explore these learners' perceptions of their own competence and agency in their roles as parents and learners. We connect these perceptions to learners' construals of self. We explore the ways that these students, who frequently describe feeling unrecognized, undervalued, or constrained by the U.S. host culture's less than generous welcome to individuals who do not possess the requisite English language skill or fluency, dedicatedly work to actualize their dreams and aspirations for themselves and their children.

II. THE MEANING OF COMING TO CLASS: "BECOMING SOMEBODY": PROVIDING FOR ONESELF AND ONE'S FAMILY

Why Do Students Say They Come to the Program and What Does Literacy Learning Seem to Offer Them?

Recently, many literacy researchers (Pierce, 1995; Weinstein-Shr, 1995; Ullman, 1997) have focused on the way that language learning (and, for the students in our study, it is English language learning) intertwines with one's social identity. Ullman (1997) writes,

> [s]ocial identity can be seen as the various ways in which people understand themselves in relation to others, and how they view their past and their future. The act of immigrating to a new country can profoundly affect a person's social identity. In fact, some people experience this change more as an act of re-creation than as a temporary process of readjustment. For example, it might necessitate re-creating one's parental role because one's child can more quickly acquire the new language and perform tasks such as talking with a landlord or paying bills. . . . These transformations are complex and continual. . . . And it is this complex, changing self that learners bring to the ESL classroom. (pp. 1, 2)

In much the same vein, we heard questions and confusions of social identity raised within and across the interviews we conducted with the Even Start ESOL and ABE learners who participated in our study. In the broadest sense, these questions related, as Ullman describes, to the learners' perceived changes in how others related to them and to the ways their views of their past and their future felt challenged or compromised due to their lack of English language fluency. Many of these learners recounted distress and frustration with their inability to enact their self-perceived parental role responsibilities. We believe these changes in the learners' self-perceptions (and social identities) comprised a challenge to the very way they constituted their roles as parents and conceived of their competence and agency as adults. In this sense, we feel that, for a majority of learners, these challenges to their social identities called for acts of reclamation and reconnection to a way of knowing put at risk. This upheaval in and challenge to their way of knowing (governing their construals of their agency as parents and adults) was an important source of the distress and disequilibrium many of the interview narratives articulate. We surmise that, for many students, these challenges (as well as their aspirations) motivated them to enroll in the Even Start program.

Overall, the students we interviewed in our study of the ABE/ESOL classes at Even Start felt satisfied with their program. Most reported increases in confidence and perceived competence as parents and adults, enhanced language fluency and literacy skills, and a positive sense that, through the various components of the program, they were better able to attain or move toward their goals and aspirations for themselves and their children. The learners' narratives of the support they felt the Even

Start program provided reminds us of Ullman's (1997) description of the dynamic way ESOL (and we would add ABE) classrooms foster transformations of identity. Ullman writes, "When immigrant learners talk about their aspirations in the United States, the teacher's response and their classmates' responses, along with their own words, are important parts of their self-re-creation" (p. 2).

In our view, the Even Start students who participated in our study felt well supported in reclaiming, reconnecting to, and, in some cases, redefining their social identities. At a later point in this chapter, we will take up the story of the particular ways these students differently required and received support from their teachers and peers for this process. What follows next is the exploration of the ways these learners experienced challenges to their perceptions of self and their parenting competence as well as an elaboration of the ways their systems of meaning organization directed resolution of these challenges, thus shaping their goals for learning and their understandings of the teaching and learning enterprise.

In this section, as in others to follow, we describe the learners' experiences from both the ABE and ESOL program in a holistic way. While we understand that there are differences in the format and focus of these two classes as well as some fundamental distinctions across the learners themselves, notably and importantly a disparity in the language fluency of the ESOL students and that of the ABE students, our interest here lies in describing the similarities that the individual students from these diverse backgrounds share by virtue of their developmental position. Moreover, in this section, the distinctions to which we draw attention are those of the differences in the ways that learners bound by different systems of meaning-making construe their goals, aspirations, and expectations in the program. We realize that in parsing the students' stories in this fashion we necessarily distort some fundamental differences. We also wonder whether the fact that almost all (but one) of the students in our study were immigrants to the U.S. might have some similarly shaping influences upon their aspirations that cut across the ESOL/ABE classes. The ESOL students saw a priority and urgency in gaining English skills so as to better communicate and be understood, and these skills were critically important to their agency in the world. We also note that almost all ESOL learners had this goal, regardless of their developmental position. Yet, even within the group of ESOL learners we studied, there were differences in the motives for learning English we feel are attributable to their developmental position. Another important difference among the students pertains to their prior work history and training for a professional degree. Only three of the students interviewed from the ESOL or ABE classes had trained for a professional career. Four of the students had worked in their home countries. Six of the 15 students were working at the time of our interviews. Nine were not employed. We note these differences because a number of students explicitly describe their goals as linked to their hopes to gain employment or re-establish their work identity. Here, too, in this realm, there are real life differences in their goals that cannot be accounted for by considering their developmental positions. For some, being able to work and attain an adequate salary was vital to their family's financial buoyancy.

A final caveat

In the sample of adult ABE/ESOL learners we interviewed, most shared some features of a Socializing way of knowing. That is to say, most of the learners in our study were either moving out of the Instrumental way of understanding toward a Socializing way of knowing, bound by a Socializing way of knowing, or growing from a Socializing way of knowing toward Self-Authorship. Of 15 students, only 2 were discerned to be solely bound by a Self-Authoring way of knowing. Therefore, for most of the students in our study (13 out of 15), a Socializing way of knowing predominates or substantially and importantly contours their understandings of the challenges they face, their view of their role responsibilities as parents, and their goals for themselves and their children. As noted by the authors of Chapter Four, we find it is difficult to draw "empirically clean" distinctions across these learners' descriptions of their reasons for joining the program and their motives for learning. Yet, subtle differences do exist that we feel are important to highlight. We agree with our colleagues' interpretation (see Chapter 4) concerning the overlap in the learners' developmental positions as "representing various points along a continuum . . . [in which] students at one end of the continuum [have] their Socializing way of understanding shaded with more Instrumental concerns [while] students at the other end [have shadings] of Self-Authorship." To help the reader make clearer distinctions about how a particular way of knowing may shape a student's understanding of self-challenges, we highlight and showcase the differences and simultaneously seek to capture those similarities that seem important to their self-descriptions.

Becoming Somebody: Forms of Agency in Parent and Learner Identity

Growing From Instrumental Ways of Understanding

Being in Trudie's presence, one feels a sense of strength and outspokenness. Originally from the Caribbean, Trudie has been in the U.S. for some time and in the program for approximately eight months. Direct and to the point, she tells it like it is, repeating a phrase many of us will recognize across the learners' narratives. Trudie puts it this way:

> I decide to come here and study so I could have my GED . . . because I will try for an education, so I can go to college, and **be somebody**.
>
> Most important thing to me is my education. Yes, I have been thinking about going back to sch[illegible] long time. And especially at reading, in U.S. if you do not have education, it's—**you are nothing**. You will not be anything. You will do a dirty job. Working hard. And having less money. You working hard, more than the other who have education. They pay you less money. Now is my . . . I'm focus in school, to have my high school diploma so I can go to college to learn something, to give me knowledge, too. When you have education, you can be somebody. . . . You can be a nurse. Without education, you can't. You can be doctor, engineer, a lot of things, you can be when you educate[d].
>
> [So without education, you're . . . ?] Nothing!

"Being somebody" and "being nobody" are words we hear throughout the interviews, across gender and across developmental position.[3] These are powerful sentiments, filled with knowledge about the inequities of class, education, and the ways U.S. culture can make invisible immigrant and minority individuals and those who have been poorly served by the educational process. For Trudie, education is a pathway out of a social identity linked to economic deprivation, demeaning work, and societal disrespect, a path away from "being nobody." This is an awareness we hear many Even Start learners articulate in many forms. Yet, in Trudie's words we also hear what is salient to learners who are growing away from the Instrumental way of knowing: the twin motives to derive the practical, concrete, and utilitarian results of education *and* the societal or social approval from important others (in valued social roles) they believe literacy and returning to school ensure. We note a subtle distinction here from the ways other learners bound *solely* by Socializing or Self-Authoring ways of knowing relate to this awareness and to striving to "become somebody." For example, Trudie both understands the definition of "being nobody" (when one is uneducated) as connected to very concrete elements—"the dirty work, the lack of money"—and she understands the societal attribution of "being nothing" as inextricably linked to the role of manual laborer delegated to the working class. In Trudie's view, there is not a sense of psychological space for the idea that someone might conceivably choose the role of manual laborer, and so she believes this role is necessarily demeaning; [dis]respect is inherent in the worker/laborer role. Of course, Trudie is right, U.S. culture *is* classist and discriminatory and quite frequently devaluing of manual laborers, though not necessarily demeaning of hard work or work that does not require college education.

So how does a developmental perspective add to our understanding of Trudie's construction of self and her motives to gain literacy skill? Interpreting her words through the lens of development, we hear in Trudie's declaration of intention what may be a unique way in which she is especially vulnerable to the societal attributions that link marginalization with class. We find that individuals who share a Socializing way of knowing are particularly vulnerable to internalizing the norms of *any culture* as defining and determinative of their self-sense. And, so, here we understand Trudie's proclamation for self-development to emblemize the ways she has come to believe she *may* be seen as a valued, approved of, and respected member of U.S. culture—"a somebody"—to guard against these negative attributions. And in this proclamation we hear her claiming her right to a social identity she wants to develop and feels is under attack by virtue of her low English and literacy skills.

Moreover, we note in Trudie's statement her ability to decode the rules for professional advancement in U.S. culture. She is, as our colleagues in Chapter 4 suggest is true for learners growing from Instrumentalism, able to discern and evaluate the lessons of cultural capital[4] when these are made explicit or are obvious. As Trudie indicates, she observes that education is the key to status, respect, and financial reward. Some second language acquisition theorists (Pierce, 1995, p 17) have begun to discuss the "complex relations of power, identity, and language learning" and the links between the acquisition of cultural capital and one's motivation to learn the target language of the community into which one is acculturating. Pierce (1995) asserts that

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[3] We note that several researchers on adult literacy learners (Luttrell, 1997, Rockhill, 1991) have explored the phenomenon of "becoming somebody." However, these authors have focused their research on women's experiences of identity development in the context of literacy learning. We use a constructive-developmental analysis to understand the different developmental meanings that "becoming somebody" has for both women and men who are at diverse developmental positions.

[4] Here we draw on the notion of cultural capital as defined by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977). These authors assert that certain knowledge, skills, and competencies are privileged in U.S. culture and, in particular, within the educational system and that these competencies are purported to be universal or objective vs. signs or codes of power (Delpit, 1995).

> learners invest in a second language, . . . with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources,[5] which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners will expect or hope to have a good return on that investment—a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources. (p. 17)

In this definition of language investment, Pierce raises questions about what some theorists delineate as distinct and separately operating motives for second language learning: instrumental and integrative motivation. In instrumental motivation, "learners have to learn a second language for utilitarian purposes, such as employment, whereas integrative motivation references the desire to learn a language to integrate successfully with the [host] community" (p.17). Pierce believes these dichotomous forms of motivation exist simultaneously. We wonder whether our developmental perspective may add to this insight and help clarify why, for example, Trudie exhibits a blend of instrumental and integrative motivations to learn English, i.e., her desire for the instrumental and practical benefits of English "to get a good job," and avoid the "dirty work, " and the more abstract idea that English affords societal recognition, acceptance, and approval housed in a professional identity (her integrative motivation). Viewed through the lens of constructive-developmentalism, we would explain this blend of motivation as emblematic of an individual's transition, growing from an Instrumental way of knowing into a more Socializing stance. This is the case for Trudie and for many of the learners in our study who are operating from this developmental position.[6]

We find that students such as Trudie, who are growing from Instrumental ways of knowing do seem to place great emphasis on establishing or reclaiming an independent agentic sense of self located in the ability to *do and act*. They appear to emphasize gaining the fundamentals of literacy as a way to meet action-oriented, concrete goals; practical needs; interests; or plans. Of course, non-native speakers of English and even ABE students with poorly developed English language skills need to acquire English fluency to be understood and independently navigate the myriad social and institutional systems with which they are involved. Not surprisingly, the narratives of the ESOL students, regardless of developmental position, seem to focus persistently on an urgency to learn English literacy and communication skills. Yet, what is interesting, especially to developmental psychologists (and we hope literacy educators), is that learners bound by Socializing and more Self-Authoring ways of knowing seem to articulate and stress *additional forms* of agency they wish to reclaim or re-establish. We think that the focus on seeking practical English skills is not necessarily indicative of a form of agency predicted by developmental position in and of itself, an observation that is probably obvious to ABE/ESOL educators. Yet, when viewed in relation to how other students understand the challenges they face, we surmise that for students growing from Instrumentalism, skill acquisition does direct their constructions of identity as "doers and actors" and circumscribes their perceptions of competence in particularly powerful ways.

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[5] Pierce (1995, p.17) defines symbolic resources as "language, education, and friendship, whereas . . . material resources include capital goods, real estate, and money."

[6] We also posit that while these twin motives may exist for learners regardless of developmental position, the expression of instrumental and integrative motivation may be different because at different developmental levels the idea of successful cultural integration will be construed differently.

Doing, Acting, and Becoming—Instrumental, Independent Agency

Jean is a native English speaker, ABE student, and dedicated mother who, for a variety of reasons, was unable to complete her high school diploma. For Jean, literacy skills are a gateway to developing a new identity as a person who can achieve her goals, both for herself and for her children, and who can act and more fully participate in the world. The process of returning to school has been transformative to Jean's sense of self, increasing her feelings of confidence and her belief in her own parental authority and competence. In particular, Jean sees learning the skills of reading and writing as critical to now being able to demonstrate her care for her children and to viewing herself as a positive role model.

> When I came to the program I couldn't read that good. I wouldn't pick nothing up to read . . . before I wouldn't pick up a book or anything because if I didn't understand it or couldn't read it, I didn't want to deal with reading or anything any more. **But now I could pick up a book or the paper and sit there and be able to read it and not get like mad at myself for not being able to read it or something.** Because like **before I wanted to read it, but I didn't understand it, so I couldn't read it, so I didn't do it. . . . [I got mad at myself because] I thought it was on me. . . . I understand what's going on in life now**. I can read the newspaper and know what's going on out in the world, and stuff. Because I would like to know what goes on around the country and stuff. Like I could understand the paper now, the weather part. Like I didn't know that before. . . .
>
> Yeah, I can read the labels now. Before I used to ask, like if there's new things in the store and I couldn't read, I had to ask my husband, what's this? Is it good? [*That must be great.*] Yeah, knowing I can do something.
>
> I just want to finish and get my high school diploma, knowing that I did one of my goals of getting my high school diploma. **Right now I feel good knowing that I can do some of the stuff that I couldn't do before**. [What's important to me is] finishing school, helping with like financial . . . but I put paying the bills, so getting a job, like financial things. Well being successful [is] to help with the financial things.

Jean's narrative reveals a new-found sense of agency and pride in being able to be an independent actor and agent in the world. Her positive identity, improved self-esteem, and perceived competence link to the mastery of particular skills and the attainment of specific, concrete, utilitarian goals. What comes through in the above excerpt is that Jean is less frustrated and has a better sense of herself as someone who can approach concrete tasks and stay with them. She can read the paper and learn about world events for and by herself. Through her own words, we sense she feels more generally connected to the world of knowledge. She no longer experiences herself as a cultural outsider.

The skills Jean acquires through the Even Start program afford her the capacities we frequently associate with having been adequately attended to in school: gaining the "tool knowledge" or multiple forms of literacy of one's society. Lifespan psychologist Erik Erikson (1968) carefully and beautifully chronicled this move into an agentic identity of "doing" in his writings about the life cycle. The risks of not acquiring such literacy "tools," he warns, may result in a sense of inferiority. The Even Start program, for Jean, appears to be a counterbalance to her felt sense of inferiority and lack of confidence. She no longer gets mad at herself about these issues. She no longer avoids a whole array of activities and no longer has to rely upon others to decode the world, thus she experiences herself to be a "successful doer." Viewed through the lens of our developmental perspective (Kegan, 1982), we believe that literacy has enabled Jean to enact the self-sufficiency critical to identity for individuals bound by this Instrumentally toned way of knowing.

For most of these students, this sense of "I can do" carries into their parenting role and undergirds their perceived competence. Their conceptions of providing for, nurturing, and teaching their children link to being *models of action*, "doing for" their children. They focus on helping their children with practical academic aspects of their school work. But the fact that some of these parents may be less fluent English speakers or less able readers than their children creates special challenges to enacting and claiming parental authority and even calls into question their perceptions of themselves as adequate caregivers and providers of their children's basic needs. We find, as some literacy researchers have suggested (Ullman, 1997; Weinstein-Shr, 1995), that adult ABE/ESOL learners with school-aged children may experience their lack of literacy as a barrier to parental authority that sets in motion an undesired, painful, and self-shaming loss of control and credibility with their children. Once again, listening to Jean's words, we can appreciate just how some of these adult learners' lack of skills—the inability to be able to do and act—translates into self-perceptions of being a bad parent and less than effective role model. Here, Jean describes the transformation she feels in her ability to define herself as an able, caring parent. In sharing Jean's words, we emphasize the action-oriented concrete quality of her language, which we feel she equates with her newly developed sense of competence and the exercise of parental authority. We find this sort of focus throughout the narratives of learners who are growing from an Instrumental way of knowing.

> It makes me feel good because I can help my kids read now. Before I used to look at them, **"I can't do it."** But now I can try to help and stuff. It makes me feel good about myself to be able to help them. Before I used to feel like I wasn't a good parent or anything 'cause I couldn't help them. . . . Well, it makes it hard, because, from my experience they look at you, you know, **if you can't do something**, they look, "why should we have to do it if you're not even going to try it?" **"If she can't do it, why should I be able to do it?"** You know? And it's a mixed message of giving them. And I think **it's better if they see you doing it, they'll do it,** and it helps them in the long run when they go get a job . . . So, I was like, if they're going to school, I can go to school and do my part. . . . If I can't help them, I have to help myself to be able to help me, so I can help them. When I couldn't help the kids and stuff, I felt bad and I was like, I can go to school and help myself and be able to help them. And now we all sit down together and we do homework at the same time . . . 'Cause I think helping your kids with their education is good because it shows you care. . . . Well, I want them to be able to make it out in this world, you know? The education they need, you know? **So they can do it on their own, do things on their own**. . . . Well I seen it from my things of being out there, growing up, the most of it you need, a lot of it. Like, if you work in a grocery store, you need to

> know your math. Anywhere. A lot of places are with money or computers, and a lot of it is, like, reading, anything is, mail, anything.

Jean's narrative seems emblematic of the way those learners who are growing from Instrumentalism construe the parent-child relationship. There is a simultaneous orientation to the concrete elements of parental care and a sense that she takes her children's perspective into account; she feels good because she is able to help her children. Yet, she casts her understanding of her children's needs and responses to her own lack of reading ability in somewhat concrete language. Being a good role model for her children, something extremely important to Jean, seems related to being a model of activity.

As we have already noted, a recurring concern, particularly for the ESOL students who were growing from Instrumentalism, was to rapidly gain English communication skills so as to better navigate and advocate their way through the medical and educational systems for their children. These parents quickly realize that effective communication skills are critical to being able to independently provide care and oversee their children's education and medical help. Almost all the ABE/ESOL students, regardless of their developmental position, report the need to gain both English fluency and reading and math skills in order to enact their role responsibilities as parents. But what strikes us as interesting is what the parents who are growing away from Instrumentalism seem *not* to say. Unlike their ESOL (and ABE immigrant) class peers who are bound by more Socializing ways of knowing, these learners seem to focus more specifically and consistently (and almost exclusively) on the practical results of English language fluency, the practical aspects of providing care and academic support to their children. In contrast, learners who were bound more by Socializing ways of knowing seemed to be most concerned about the internal psychological-emotional elements that they see as implicated in effective communication with others.

Here, Yvette, a mother of two children and an ESOL student, discusses her pride in becoming more fluent in English. Similar to Jean, she sees English fluency as enabling her to better provide for her children's basic physical and educational needs. English also helps her reclaim her independence and authority as a parent and moral guide for her children.

> Yes, **I can talk to people**. . . . If you have a child in the school, it's important to know how she's doing or how he's doing in the class . . . if something happens, you can know. But if you not have conversation with the teachers, you don't know what happened with your child in the class. Sometimes the teacher would like to say something to you about your child but you don't have conversation with them, you don't know anything . . . Now I can know how my children are doing in school. Sometimes I ask the teacher, how are my son or my children doing?
>
> Ya, now **I can ask questions**, if I can't understand, if I want something, if I need something. **I can ask for something**. Example, my daughter, sometime I don't know what [happens]. She came home with the report card but have no grade, and I said, "What happened about your report card? Because you didn't have the grade." But I say maybe, but when I talked to her she didn't [say]. I said maybe I can find out what just happened. **I didn't have too much English, but maybe if I say** something [to the teacher] . . . But when I come, the teacher told me, my daughter sometime didn't pay attention when you say something . . . she not finish the work

> the teacher give . . . [I say to her] "they say you didn't pay attention when he [the teacher] say something."
>
> Yes, she was not paying attention. . . . I talk to her, nothing changed. But I went to classes, I told the teachers, "I would like you change my daughter's seat, because if seat is different, she can pay attention. If you move her, she can listen to what you say."
>
> But for my home, my husband working all night, I'm at home with my children. If something happens or when something happens, if I speak English **I can do it by myself**. Like to call an ambulance . . . If something happens, something, **you can call for other people, you can ask for help.** But if you speak you can make the phone call, maybe an ambulance, tell what happened. . . . **Now I know [English], I can work with my children.** Sometime they brought their homework at home, they ask me for something, but I don't know. I know in my language, but I don't know, I can't ask, I can't help him [her son] for English. Sometimes she [her daughter] ask me something, but . . . she don't understand what I say, sometime she try by herself . . . But now when they ask me something, I know, **I understand what they're asking.** We couldn't work together. But if you not speak English, you can't [help with] homework.
>
> **I think if I stay home, I didn't come [to the Even Start program], I can't do it.** Maybe I fail everything, but now when I keep going, I knew exactly what they mean . . . everything my husband know, I take the train with my children, I go to somewhere I have appointment with XX hospital with my kids. My husband don't have time to bring me **I took the train by myself . . . I proud. . . . now I can say, "Hi, bye," can have little conversation, but before I can't.**

In Yvette's dialogue, we again note the complex relationship between identity, power, and language learning. Pierce (1995) suggests that

> when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers . . . they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. (p. 18)

We agree with this interpretation and hear Yvette reorganize and reclaim a positive self-view, shaped by her way of knowing. Using a constructive-developmental framework, we would suggest that Yvette, in gaining English fluency, is reconnecting to a self identified with enacting and meeting her utilitarian plans, purposes, and more concrete needs.

Socializing Ways of Understanding

Becoming Somebody—Being "Seen" by Others and Belonging: Mutuality and Empathy as Forms of Agency

Learners bound by the Socializing way of understanding depicted different aspirations for and challenges to their sense of self, their social identity. In these students' narratives, expressions of self-doubt as well as self-confidence involved the threat to or enhancement of their perceptions of relational and interpersonal connectedness and acceptance. Indeed, for these participants, a sense of reciprocal sharing and understanding appeared linked to their internal sense of "belonging, being seen, and being somebody." These learners' narratives articulate a desire to recapture and reconnect to the way they know themselves and make sense of the world.

While these students described a desire to learn and master the practical aspects of communication and writing skills, they seemed consider this interest part of a bigger intention. For these students, being a competent and effective communicator was a natural bridge and necessary means to reclaiming an identity located in their *perceived* ability to express understanding of another's perspective and have their own wishes, thoughts, and ideas understood by others. This relational tendency to put themselves in the shoes of the other and to communicate this understanding felt beyond their reach and caused much pain, emotional distress, and, we suggest, disequilibrium to their sense of self. Without this mutual and reciprocal mode of speaking and relating, these women felt that they were disconnected from themselves, from the others they cared for most, and from the world in general. On the other hand, successful relations, interactions, and communications facilitated by better English usage served as a primary measure of self-esteem and source of well-being, or, as one participant noted, "They understand, I understand too, that makes me feel happy" (Sarita, an ESOL student).

Anna, a quiet woman from the Caribbean, is an ABE student and the mother of three children. Here, Anna describes the difficulty of being unable to communicate with others. She is distressed by being unable to relate in an emotionally mutual and reciprocal way. Again, this is a notably different sensibility from the way Yvette and other students growing from Instrumentalism describe the communication impasses they encounter.

> **If you are here and you don't understand anybody, I feel like it's like you're living in another world** . . . I think if you're living some place, you **should** understand the language of the country so you can communicate. So you can understand and people can understand because if you don't, sometimes you just . . . sometime people say something, and you just don't understanding. I think it's hard a little bit when you cannot understand somebody else . . . you don't understand somebody . . . what did he say? . . . **I think it's hard for both people. I think somebody doesn't understand you, they feel bad, too** . . . you just feel like, **you feel embarrassed.** Somebody said something . . . you don't understand and the. . . . Sometimes you feel, feel embarrassed . . . Because sometimes people get nervous as they talk to you and you don't understand, sometimes they can get nervous, too.

For individuals bound by the Socializing way of knowing, a "sense of self [is constituted] in the relationship between [their] own point of view and the other's" (Kegan, 1994, p 126). Thus, unable to communicate, Anna feels embarrassed and assumes that the person with whom she is speaking feels similarly upset. Therefore, a lack of English fluency creates a different challenge for these students: English fluency is not *only* necessary to meet their concrete needs, but is inextricably linked to their the enactment of *a particular sense of self.* Their construction of identity is based upon empathy and reciprocity. Anna's and Yvette's differing reactions to being misunderstood are not rooted in one's lack of self-esteem or less developed interpersonal skill but linked directly to differences in their ways of knowing that shape their perceptions of themselves in relation to others, their social identities. Unable to communicate clearly and empathically, Anna's way of experiencing herself in relation to others (in which her sense of self is defined through the expectations and opinions of others) is compromised. She feels she is not herself and disconnected from the way she relates to her social context. She feels she is "living in another world."

Felicia, an ESOL student from South America, exudes energy, ebullience, and a deep interest in people. Although she received university training in her home country, she is unable to work at her profession in the U.S. Felicia views her interpersonal skills as strong and also has a strong professional identity. She is deeply frustrated because she is unable to realize these aspects of herself that are not merely personality traits or achievements but emblematic of her way of knowing. Here, Felicia talks about the primacy of being able to relate and communicate. She links communication and how she is perceived by others to her definition of who she "really is."

> . . . communication, I love that. I love communication with the people. For example, that's my goal now because in my language . . . I speak with the people a lot. So I have a lot of conversation with the people. I love to speak with the people. Many kinds of things. But in English, I can't. So I feel like, too frustrated. And in my language, that's my skill. I have a lot of relations. . . . For example, sometimes about communication, when I stay on the bus some people will start talking with me. You know, they start the conversation. And they're talking and talking and I'm saying "Oh yes, yes." I understand what they say, but I can't continue the conversation. I can't participate. And they're waiting for me. And I'll say, "Oh yes, oh, good." Or something like that. And they say, "Uh-oh." [*Like you have so many ideas, but you can't express it.*] Yes! Yes! So then they probably think I'm dumb or something, or that I'm not interesting because I'm just saying, good, good, good. Mhmm, Yes, Yes! . . . So the communication—I think for me communication is the big, the principal point. **No in this country, everywhere. If you can't get the communication with everybody,** you can do nothing. **You are nothing.** If you can't talk, you can't do nothing. So that is really important. That's my goal now. I need—I want to learn for complete English for read, write, everything. So, I really can do what I'm really like to do, **what I really am.** (emphasis ours)

For Felicia, English and the ability to communicate enables her to reclaim the sense of self she cannot express because of her poor language skills. English is a key unlocking the expression of her identity, her sense and understanding of her past, real self. Without English fluency, she feels unable to have authentic relationships with others who speak English.

Craig Sorti writes about the forms of psychological distress—or culture shock—a person may feel when they are new to a foreign country. Here, Sorti (1992) poignantly describes the powerful sense of disconnection that may occur when individuals lack linguistic fluency and cannot express themselves and enact their identities.[7] He writes,

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[7] We are indebted to Deborah Helsing for acquainting us with Sorti's ideas and this powerful statement of self-estrangement.

> . . . if we can't communicate our views and explain ourselves, how can anyone know us? (And how, for that matter, can we know us?) And if we can't understand others, how can we know them? Not knowing anyone, not being known by anyone, we feel isolated and profoundly alone. Indeed, we feel isolated from ourself and lonely for that person we know ourself to be but can no longer express. (p.13)

We believe that Sorti's depiction of the pain of not being known captures the internal disequilibrium of such ABE/ESOL learners as Felicia and Anna, who are bound by the Socializing way of knowing. Once again, we assert that these individuals are especially and uniquely distressed by the inability to express themselves, and this poses a critical challenge to their way of knowing. Without the linguistic fluency that lets them establish truly reciprocal relationships, these students experience a threat to their very selfhood.

Some of the students in our study articulate a strong desire to reclaim, develop, or establish a work identity. Those who have had a career feel especially thwarted by their lack of English skills, and several looked to the program as a steppingstone to a work identity. But learners operating at the Socializing way of knowing seem less focused on the instrumental advantages—money, leisure time, or status—a career may afford. For them, establishing a work identity seems tied to reclaiming or developing this sense of self in which a career is more than a job. They see this as a path toward self-development, representing and defining themselves and their values. Here, Felicia describes her hopes for this journey. Much like other students bound by the Socializing way of knowing, she views education as a means to her goals. Yet she also views education and learning as intrinsically rewarding because she "likes to know anything."

> So I went to the university. I choose my profession, and **I love my profession,** and **I know what I like, it's what I'm going to know.** So, I'm studying my profession, very happy in like I put my old interest in, and **I love mathematics,** and I like . . . to study my profession to improve myself. . . . I learn, it was easy for me to learn that [about her profession] because I really want to get my profession, to improve myself, that's way. . . . And, **well, I always, I like to study. I like to learn many things. I'm very curious.**
>
> Oh, I like to learn, for to get more information. **I like to know anything. That's why I like to learn things.** So I get my profession in my country. I'm professional in my country. And when I came here, I wasn't nothing. Why? My English, my kids . . . So I want to go in that.
>
> **My wish is continuing to study.** Improve in my profession. And I would like to work I really what I want. I've got opportunity to work but not my profession. So, that's not really what I want to do.

Raquelle is an ABE learner who shares a similar view of the value of education. Her deeper motives for learning are linked to developing an abstract professional identity, a vision of herself projected into the future. For Raquelle, learning English is the bridge to becoming somebody—the somebody and self of her dreams.

> I can speak better, I can work better. I would like to do something else. I would like to become an occupational therapist . . . because if you can read, you can write. And you know math. So you can do it. If [you] don't know . . . **you can't dream that.**

Anna also worries about who she will become and links the challenge of enacting her aspirations to self-discovery. She is not concerned with the utilitarian gains learning and studying yield. Rather, her educational focus and views of her own identity development are more abstract: She wants to find something she loves.

> I'm worried about making my life. Like, sometimes you as a person, you're always saying, "How? How I'm going to make my life?" Like sometimes it's very difficult to make your life. And I think it's for everybody. Am I going to finish my school? Am I going to find what to do? What kind of person I be? . . . You like to finish school, go to college and learn something, and then work. . . . I'm just trying to develop my skills first, before I start to learn something. Then I see what would be the best for me to do. I think to learn something, **sometimes you have to love that thing, because sometimes people learn something, but they don't love it.** They don't like it, you know. I think before somebody start, you should like it first, and then you go on to it.

Whereas Kegan (1994) states that for Instrumental knowers "the future is the present that hasn't happened yet," these women, all operating from the Socializing way of knowing, see their sense of self and identity evolving over time. Being and becoming are vitally important to them. Their learning enables them to envision a future and a sense of reaching into themselves and their dreams.

Success as a student and success as a parent seem inseparable for learners in this developmental position. In this developmental position, a person defines herself through or "made up by" the opinions, expectations, and values of others, and evaluates based on others' assessment of her role performance. For adults who make sense at the Socializing way of knowing, what they should do, should know, or should be to fulfill their responsibilities as a parent or student is specifically defined by important individuals outside themselves and, more generally, by societal or cultural norms. Moreover, the ability to fulfill these others' expectations directly affects how they feel about themselves and evaluate their competence as a person and, in this case, as a parent.

In this context, mastery of communication and written skills takes on new meaning and importance. While non-native speakers in any developmental position want to communicate effectively and better navigate various cultural systems, learners operating from the Socializing way of knowing see acquiring these skills differently. The skills themselves become the commerce for meeting the hopes, wishes, and expectations of important others, such as one's children or spouse. English and communication skills enable these students to enact their values and ideals, what they've come to feel and believe a parent *should do* to be perceived, and to perceive themselves, as a good parent. Meeting these expectations is critical for these parents to feel they are maintaining the bond of trust and connection.

Anna's dialogue about the importance of helping her children reveals the kind of bootstrapping effect between increased literacy skill gained in the Even Start program and sense of agency these learners' experience as parents. This agency is subtly distinct from the more instrumentally oriented learners' perceptions of agency and competence. It is not solely about helping a child "to do" but about helping a child "to be" and, specifically, to be less helpless. Skill learning is the steppingstone to fulfilling such parenting ideals as the care, protection, and nurturance of a child's emotions and well-being.

> My family's important to me . . . I mean my kids, my husband, and my parents. They are all important to me. **I think that I should care about them because they are part of myself.**
>
> My little one, every time he comes home with homework, he always enjoy when I can sit down and have . . . my homework. He's the youngest, and **I have to sit down and help him so he doesn't feel so helpless.** He has somebody to help him. . . . and then if you can help them when they're having a problem at school, you can understand them also . . . like, you go to school, too, so you will understand them, how they do all . . . They learn in English and sometimes they come to you and say, "What is this, what is that?" Then I think it's hard for them not to find help at home because you don't understand, so you cannot help them. So if you know, if you learn something, you can help them to do, and **they feel better so to see that you can understand those kids** when they come home and say, "What is this, and I don't know," and **they feel bad, and they feel helpless**. . . . Like, sometimes I feel like he feels happy that I can help him . . . **If I didn't come to the program, I wouldn't be able to do that.**

Anna's increased enjoyment as a parent and an increased sense that she can help her children with their school work appears linked to her learning in the Even Start program. It seems notable that students bound by the Socializing way of knowing construe helping their children with homework or reading as connected to enacting their parenting values and ideals. Helping their children become someone, and attending to their internal psychological well-being, affects these parents' positive self-evaluations. We believe that for these students, the literacy learning they gain in the program promotes and sustains a positive parental identity and/or enables them to reconnect or reclaim their sense of themselves as capable, nurturing parents. Felicia puts it this way,

> I like to learn . . . I like to improve myself and for good mother, I try to do anything to be happy my children . . . If I improve myself, I can give more opportunities to my children. Right now I do, if I do anything it's not really for me. More it is for my children. If I learn for completely English I can help my son. I know he asks me many, he will ask me many things because he needs the help . . . And they have a lot of problems because they need help with their school work. And that's why I want to learn. And that's more for my children. Because I don't want to say, "Oh, no, I don't know." **And I would like my children to feel happy with me** . . . if somebody asks, what's your mother? **And they feel like proud.**

Raquelle connects her own learning to providing her child academic help. She links this directly to giving her son a positive future and strong identity.

> For myself, I want to know more English, more vocabulary, more in everything and to give you [her son] what I've been living in my country. I really want to know more so I can raise my son and help him with his homework and with his life, too. That's why I really like this program.

Raquelle shares her understanding of the way her son values and depends upon her developing English skill and general knowledge. Once again, in relaying how her son feels, she exhibits the characteristic way these learners put themselves in the psychological shoes of the their children. Their capacity for empathy and attention to their children's internal well-being guides their notions of providing, nurturing, and teaching. Being able to help their children motivates them to remain in the program and apply themselves to learning. For example, Raquelle stays in the program and learns English to help her son with his homework, but also sees learning English as the means to meet his psychological and intellectual needs.

> Mommy, I hope you stay [in the program] . . . don't quit, Mommy. And I say, I will keep going for you. He said because, Mommy, when I have big homework, mommy, daddy cannot help me. If you cannot help me, Mommy, what am I going to do with my homework? You've been such a good help, you've been good Mommy helping me. So if you keep going to school, you will help me more. And I said, "Okay, I will." And I've been coming ever since.

In this quote we see how attuned Raquelle is to her son's bid for help. He seems to be suggesting that, without his mother's support, he will not know how to do his homework. Like Anna, rather than allow her child to feel helpless, Raquelle promises to keep attending her ABE class so she may effectively guide her son's learning. Raquelle does this at great cost to herself. To remain enrolled, she has dramatically changed her work schedule. Raquelle's efforts indicate her commitment to the value of education and her deep desire to support her son's motivation to learn and sense of positive academic achievement.

Sarita, an ESOL student from South Asia, feels similarly motivated and also values education both as a way to help her son meet the demands of school and to support his emotional well-being. When she cannot offer this support, she feels she is not able to care for her son. Her view of herself as a good parent is challenged. Characteristic of individuals who make meaning in this way, Sarita is upset with herself when her son is upset. Thus, her education involves her positive sense of self and feelings of competence to do what she understands *one should* do as a parent: actively step in and support the child's emotional and intellectual growth.

> My son, he has homework, I can help him with homework. When I couldn't help him, I felt very upset myself. And when I help him, I understand that things, and I feel like he's happy that I can help him. I'm proud and I happy.

Growing Toward and Reaching Self-Authorship

Becoming Somebody—Doing Something for Myself: Self-direction, Self-expansion, and Realizing One's Potential as Agency

Most of the learners growing toward Self-Authorship share qualities of those who are bound by the Socializing way of knowing. They overlap in the ways they describe their aspirations, concerns, and challenges for themselves and their children. Several of these students report a concern about helping their children with school work, worry about their children's helplessness, and are deeply upset if they cannot help their children. Some mention frustrations stemming from the disparity between their children's English fluency and their own. These adults also orient to their children's emotional and psychological world and feel successful when they connect verbally on this level. Those who are new English speakers consistently describe the difficulties they face in navigating medical, educational, and business worlds that assume and require a high degree of English fluency. Much like their peers growing from the Instrumental ways of knowing, these learners continue to express an interest in and focus on mastering practical communication, writing, and reading skills. For the most part, they view participation in the Even Start program as helping them meet their varied goals. Yet in their interviews, these students tend to speak slightly more from a place of self-directedness. They also linked their concerns for themselves and their children to their attitudes, behaviors, and value differences. They seem to have a greater perspective on ways they may inhibit themselves or, alternatively, do not allow themselves to feel diminished. They also seemed to value education as a path toward actualizing their views of lifelong personal development. Thus, some of these students appear to construe challenges to their social identity as challenges to enacting and/or developing their stalled or unrealized potential. Others, especially those who worked or had careers in the past, seem to describe a struggle to enact their fullest sense of themselves, which they discern is restricted by lack of cultural recognition or legitimation of their intelligence, abilities, or credentials. They believe in their abilities and intelligence regardless of others' assessment.

Linn is an Asian ABE student who trained for and had a professional career in her home country. Now she does not work and stays home to care for her young children. In her interviews, Linn describes the many difficulties she experienced in making the move to the U.S. Linn is moving from a Socializing to a Self-Authoring way of understanding and, characteristically, is struggling with her perception of herself as a mother and an adult professional. This is fueled by issues of acculturation (e.g., social isolation, difficulty navigating systems, lack of professional entree, lack of childcare, cultural expectations that she act as her children's primary caretaker). Linn wants to support her children's development and understands their needs as coming first. Although Linn has determined this, it is difficult to ascertain whether she is following what is expected of her or whether she herself believes this to be a priority. Linn also feels a strong urge to develop her self, reclaim her professional identity, and expand her knowledge of the world and herself. While she seems to feel trapped by her domestic and social situation, she also reflects on the ways she feels in conflict. She perceives that she has not kept up with the knowledge and learning she values. She understands she is unable to motivate herself at home and realizes she needs a supportive context, such as Even Start, to begin to regain her self-esteem and positive attitude. These insights seem to be emergent elements of a Self-Authoring way of knowing in which individuals tend to hold themselves responsible for their actions related to their goals and aspirations.

In Linn's narrative, she reports feeling depression and a loss of self-esteem. We wonder if some of this relates to her lost career identity, which may both define her and express her urge for self-definition and self-development. Lynn reports having chosen a career her family opposed. Perhaps her chosen professional identity is linked to a growing edge of Self-Authorship and self-determination that may feel less available to her because she is her family's primary caretaker, a role she seems to equate with putting her desire to study on hold.

Here, Linn poignantly recounts the inner conflict she experienced in staying home to take care of her children.

> During the years I very, **sometimes I was very upset.** Sometimes I want to study more and more. . . . **My desire is I want to study more, but my family situation is not, I have to stay home. So I have very many conflicts with myself. . . .** So, I think it's not time to study or going to outside. I want to stay with the home. Only when they [her children] go to school, I can start studying. **In my experience when I stayed with my children, sometimes it's good, but sometimes it makes me depressed** because I don't have any chance to meet other people. Most of the time, inside of me I want to do something to improve my life. This time I'm very happy with this program. It makes me happy. I want, I think I can do something.
>
> When I being this program the situation in my life, the time I feel very, **I want to something to study and to be other things . . . but in my mind I can't do that cuz I can't English, I have to take care of the children, I'm too old to study other things.** After this program I'm getting good to learn English and then I saw other students. They have a hard life, they study here, and they work, and they have to take care of the children, many children. When I look them I feel I'm not lonely. Many other immigrants they live very hard too, very hard time. So I can do my life positively. . . . When I stay home, I don't have any motivation to learn something. Only for housework. But when I study here I meet the other student and meet good teachers and meeting good people is another learning to me. Not only English.
>
> So, nowadays, my children are growing, so I have to teach English and I have to read English to my children. I think I have to study more because of my children are growing, so I have to teach English and I have to read English to my children And then, future life I want to be, I want to be something, someone. . . . At this time I only housewife and mother. And after growing my children, I want to study something, and then I want to be someone. But the English is necessary to do something.
>
> I decided I want to study more, and then after I study [in her profession] after that I want to work at my career. The language is more powerful tools to live in U.S.A. If I can't speak English, I think I during the times, I lost my self-esteem. Yeah, I can't do anything, when I go outside, I can't speak English, I didn't do anything. I have more self-confidence now, and also I think I can do something.

Linn's struggle is complex. To some extent, she seems to have internalized the feeling she is not "somebody" because the U.S. system does not afford the immediate opportunity for her to work at her profession. She also seems torn about defining herself primarily as a mother, yet feels compelled to do so. Her dialogue reminds us of Rockhill's (1991, p. 346) research, in which she asserts that women feel "an acute desire for their children to become educated." Rockhill suggests that while women believe supporting their children's and husbands' literacy is critical, they have a hard time claiming this support for themselves and frequently put their own development and education on hold because of family responsibilities.

We surmise that the obstacles immigrant ABE/ESOL learners face in quickly re-establishing their careers in U.S. culture (which tends not to recognize their credentials and training) may exacerbate the conflict women professionals experience as they emerge from Socializing ways of knowing into a more Self-Authoring stance. These women may already be undergoing developmentally driven internal conflicts about supporting their own or their children's development (still understood in rather either/or terms). We wonder whether obstacles to reclaiming their legitimate professional status might thus be construed as too difficult to overcome, taking too much time away from family obligations. Under such difficult and unwelcoming political circumstances and feeling they must meet others' demands and expectations, these women may "fall back" to the Socializing knowers' tendency to place others needs ahead of their own.

A context such as Even Start may be especially helpful to immigrant learners in these circumstances. Listening to Linn, we get the sense that the Even Start program has bolstered her confidence and facilitated her reconnection to her identity as a lifelong learner. Like many students moving into Self-Authorship, she sees learning as a venue for self-development and self-discovery. Here she reflects on her drive for continued self-enhancement she yokes, in part, to keeping pace with evolving knowledge.

> After move to U.S.A., I didn't have much time to read the magazine . . . I want to know about the other world. About the social changing the society, and then the knowledge is changing and then develops, so I stopped to, before I move here, I think I stopped my knowledge about the society. But this class I enjoy the many kind of topics. Sometimes we read about science, sometimes we read about history.

Almost all of the learners who are moving toward or reaching Self-Authorship report this interest in and concern about gaining or deepening their knowledge. For these learners, cultural and general knowledge is linked to their desire for self-expansion and is the means to gain their competence in "reading the world" (Friere & Macedo, 1987), or decoding, interpreting, analyzing, and eventually critiquing their psychosocial surround for themselves and their children.

Dalia is an ABE student from the Caribbean and mother of several children, one of whom attends the Even Start preschool. Like other more Self-Authoring students, Dalia articulates an impulse toward self-definition and self-direction.

> I wanted to always keep my mind fresh and organized and learning new things. I never felt like I knew as much as I wanted to . . . Getting a college education to me would be like a way to have a door open for me . . . with a college degree . . . **nobody is going to tell me . . . you are not qualified.**
>
> School, I think basically what it says to me . . . **I'm doing something for myself** . . . I think I'm more proud of myself. I feel like I'm accomplishing something for myself.

Dalia's concerns for her self-development seem reflective of Self-Authoring learners' orientation to "deepen one's understanding of [one]self, and world . . . and [to] develop an increasing capacity to manage [one's] own destiny" (Weathersby, 1976, p. 88). Dalia clearly sees returning to school as "doing something for herself" to enhance her self-esteem. Moreover, she seems to be saying she sets the terms for how much or how little she needs to know. Dalia appears to suggest that she's aware that education is perceived as a kind of cultural legitimation of and key to expertise, but she also believes in her own intelligence. With an education, she can gain access, knowledge, and mastery for herself and protect herself from others' attempts to limit her options. For Dalia, education ensures that she can maximize and enact her own strengths and self-assessed abilities. This drive for self-direction and self-promotion is indicative of Self-Authoring learners' capacity and tendency to evaluate themselves through their own standards and to set the terms of their own learning. Literacy learning lets Dalia expand and elaborate her identity as a competent adult.

Hamid, another ABE student, describes a similar understanding of education as an essential step to achieving his goals and reconnecting to his self-defined professional capacities. Hamid's job in the United States is only tangentially related to his work in his Sub-Saharan home country, where he was involved in a health-related profession and reports having considerable experience and responsibilities. He is unable to work at the same professional level in the U.S. He aspires to reclaim his work identity and do the work he loved. Hamid describes his capacities and the challenge he sees in recapturing his work identity.

> The education very important, and you know, how to earn a better life. . . . If you don't have education [in the U.S.] really too hard done, even if you smart. [*Even if you're smart it's hard to do things?*] Yes. The people believe only also what paper he had. . . . when you have work, I, for example, myself, I was doing back home [mentions his profession]. . . . Yes, when I left my home. I was doing many things there [mentions his varied areas of responsibility] . . . I saw it in America, if you don't have paper, they think you know nothing.

Being seen as somebody or being seen to know nothing cuts across many learners' interviews. But Hamid's awareness of the way he is evaluated is most similar to Dalia's insight. Unlike Felicia, Hamid does not seem to feel or believe he *is* nothing without the required credentials or English fluency. Rather, like Dalia, Hamid identifies a need to acquire specific credentials to attain a certain professional clout and status. These credentials "open the door," as Dalia asserts, but they do not determine his abilities and capacities. Hamid defines and evaluates his own skills according to his own standards. He merely understands the need of having certain credentials in the U.S. to regain the work he finds meaningful.

For adults who have reached or are growing toward Self-Authorship, learning for its own sake is rewarding. Like Linn, Dalia seems fueled and energized by new ideas, "keep[ing] [her] mind fresh." Unlike Socializing learners, who also may enjoy learning, Dalia seems to appreciate both the *content* and the *process* of learning and discussing as means for self-discovery. She describes classroom learning as an opportunity not only to gain knowledge but to discover herself, her feelings, and her ideas.

> . . . being active doing things, communicat[ing] with other people, talking about whatever we read, who agrees, who disagrees . . . our feelings about it . . . so to develop ourselves more.

She seems to bring the personal enrichment she gains through learning into her social relations.

> . . . go places, and I meet people, and I have something to talk about . . . I just learned something, and I take it in and then I can share it with others. I like that very much.

One gets the feeling from these interview excerpts that Dalia appreciates the chance to develop ideas and then debate them with others, to compare how others think about things, to compare perspectives. This is different from the concerns of Socializing learners, such as Anna. To belong and to feel connected and accepted, and to reduce awkwardness with others, Anna wants to learn English and to empathize with others' experiences. In contrast, Dalia seems to view learning and interacting as a chance to develop her own ideas for their own sake, to develop herself in relation (and sometimes in opposition) to others. She relates these capacities to strengthening her sense of self and her social identity. For these Self-Authoring learners, exposure to new ideas and new realms of learning seems to ignite self-direction and self-discovery.

Dalia reflects on her self-perceived changes, changes she attributes to being at the Even Start program. Here, Dalia comments on the ways she has integrated what she has seen and participated in during the "parent and child time."

> I felt more constructive, more energetic, more productive . . . I did more than just like before . . . when I went to school, then I started doing arts and crafts and coloring and painting and patterns and shapes . . . I got into plants, I got into gardening, I got into a lot of other stuff instead of just certain basics. I was getting involved with an area that I was creating things, that was active, and doing different things all the time.

Dalia's appreciation for the process of learning as discussing, debating, creating, and experimenting, and her explicit understanding of the transfer of knowledge to her social encounters, reflect a vision shared by several of these Self-Authoring students of education as deepening one's interests and self-knowledge and as ongoing and lifelong. Another ABE student—Ho, who is from South Asia—echoes a similar understanding of education when he says, "I always thought learning would never end." Self-Authoring individuals construe "being somebody" (enacting their personal agency and identity) as linked to actualizing their self-named potential.

Several of the Self-Authoring learners noted that they particularly prized learning about the ways various cultures and governing institutions operate. These more Self-Authoring learners' concerns and hopes as parents appeared to emanate from their questions and perspectives about the difficulties of actively constructing and reconstructing their own and their children's identities in a new culture. They seem to appreciate learning how U.S. institutions, cultural values, and norms "work." They appear to view cultural literacy and cultural knowledge as particularly important to enacting their self-assigned parental responsibility as cultural translators. One mother, Ahara, an ESOL student from the sub-Sahara, reports the challenges she faces as a parent.

> I don't know American system. I have for another culture, but when I looking for this . . . they born in this country, my children, they learn the same American people. **I responsible for my children. I'm thinking about my children. How my children grow up. I look in. I find out both things, both cultures.**
>
> My children, they ask to me too many questions. I didn't know that about American history. I don't grow up this country and when I started the book, when they asked me and I couldn't explain or translate. Still I need to learn English. . . . **Now the difficult time with my daughter. I teach her about when I was child. But she wanted about this country.** I help her, she say, "Mommy, no, I tell you this, just pay attention to what you teaching [about this country]." . . . But still now when I come because different culture, you have to learn [about this culture] when you live this country. Just I pay attention how it working. . . . Just now I need to learn about this country. Yes, I live here, and when I went outside, I see different culture because this is a big country. The people, they came from different country. They have different culture. They have different language. But when you meet them, they learn from me, I learn from them.
>
> They're helping me a lot. **Very important adult talking how discuss issues children, how to learn how the system in America is different**. Because I have different culture . . . In other class they learn many things about another people, for different country, different opinions.

As we will explore in the next section, several of these students raised concerns about the challenge of living in a bicultural system and saw acquiring cultural knowledge as key to guiding their children. That these learners seem able to step back, assess, and evaluate differences and values across their home and U.S. culture seems indicative of the move toward Self-Authorship. These students seem less focused on "belonging," or fitting in, or blending with the U.S. culture. Rather, they wish to decode cultural norms and practices and adopt what they choose and discern as important.

Linn is concerned about maintaining her home-country cultural values for her children. Yet she believes that her children need to learn and integrate both cultures as part of their identity, so they can "success for . . . life."

> [*And you said you teach your children about your culture?*] This is very difficult question. Yeah, sometimes I worry about that situation. I so, so many Asian children have, like that kind of problem. They lost their identity in the U.S.A., so they have many problems in this country. But me and my husband believe if they have a strong identity, I'm an Asian and I'm and American-Asian, I'm American. If they have a strong identity, they can [have] American culture and Asian culture. . . . But if they don't have much [of both cultures] . . . they don't know who they are, they not Asian, they not American. . . . So because of that, me and my husband also want to teach our culture and our language. But in that situation, he [her son] can success for his life.

In summary, the ABE and ESOL adult learners we interviewed at the Even Start program described a variety of challenges to enacting their aspirations, goals, and visions for themselves and their children. Many recounted problems in fulfilling their parenting role responsibilities. To be sure, many of these perceived concerns and challenges linked to difficulties of acculturation, such as lack of access to preferred work, disparities between their children's and their own English language abilities, and problems navigating through culturally insensitive medical, educational, and business institutions requiring English language fluency. For a few ABE students who had been poorly served by the U.S. elementary and secondary educational systems, regaining self-confidence as learners and mastering basic literacy skills were important. We believe that these multiple challenges and concerns threatened students' self-perceptions and their sense of the "somebody" they longed to be or sought to reclaim. Furthermore, we assert that these threats challenged the way these learners made sense of their lives and conceived of their roles as parents and agency as adults.

Although almost all of the students faced similar economic and sociopolitical challenges, we observed that these ABE and ESOL learners interpreted these challenges somewhat differently. Consistent with the developmental literature, their differing construals and resolutions of challenges to their social identities depended on their developmental position or way of knowing. Despite their diverse backgrounds, individuals who shared a particular way of knowing saw the challenges similarly and articulated many common concerns. Thus, these challenges or threats to their constructions of their identity and agency are best understood as a developmentally defined trajectory of constructed challenges to what they can do, to the ways they may belong and are accepted or understood by others, or maximizing and enacting their self-chosen values and/or ideology.

These students also experienced threats to their identity as parents. Once again, these challenges were interpreted and constructed differently. For example, all of the learners described a desire to take care of their children and help them learn. They all expressed concern about obstacles to acting as their children's caretaker and provider. However, the focus and meaning of taking care and helping (as well as the construal of obstacles) varied, depending on the learners' developmental position. Parents growing from an Instrumental way of knowing stressed taking care of their children's practical, physical, and concrete learning needs. They felt a sense of shame and lack of authority in not being able to *"do for"* or present a positive *model of action* for their children. Parents operating from the Socializing way of knowing exhibited an interest in meeting their children's practical, physical, and learning needs but also emphasized supporting and developing their children's psychological and emotional well-being. When they were unable to communicate their attunement to and understanding of their children's emotional needs, these parents felt guilty and believed they had breached a bond of trust with their children, leaving them disappointed and helpless. In contrast, a majority of parents growing toward or reaching Self-Authorship not only considered all of this important but also were concerned about their children's biculturalism and sought to actively guide and fashion their children's identity. They saw their lack of knowledge and understanding of U.S. culture, institutions, and governance as a threat to their parenting competence. They considered this knowledge necessary to fulfill their self-defined parental responsibility to help establish their children's bicultural identity.

Thus, we note a layering of concerns informed by an individual's developmental position. Further, we surmise that differences in concerns are linked to differing motivations to learn and, as we will describe later, differing instructional preferences and supports deemed helpful to becoming the "somebody they wished to be." We turn now to exploring aspects of the Even Start curriculum that posed another developmental or cultural challenge for some.

III. PARENTING: VIEWS OF TEACHING AND GUIDING AND ACCULTURATION: FOLLOWING THE RULES, "FITTING IN" AND "READING THE WORLD"

We begin this section with a premise increasingly shared by developmentally minded educators (Kegan, 1994; Lasker, 1975; Tinberg & Weisberger, 1998; Weathersby, 1976). We suggest that not only are students' expectations and interpretations of challenges and role responsibilities influenced and shaped by their developmental position, but that institutions, teachers, educational programs, and curricula commonly operate out of particular developmentally linked internal logics (Lasker, 1975; Kegan, 1994; Weathersby, 1976). We believe teachers (who bring their own way of knowing to work with them), program curricula, and specific learning tasks make what are often implicit (though sometimes explicit), developmental demands upon the learners. That is, we posit that certain curricula or learning tasks require a threshold or benchmark level of development and that learners must be operating at a particular developmental position affording specific developmental capacities to succeed in a task or learn the curriculum material.

We find that the Even Start program is no exception—particularly in the parenting education curriculum, one of the elements the learners regarded most highly. This curriculum material is delivered contextually to ESOL and ABE students and integrated within classroom learning. It is seeded through the preschool program, a critical piece of parent discussions, and transmitted through the program's parent-and-child time components. In particular, the program's view of discipline and its developmental orientation to children's learning and growth seem especially well suited to and readily grasped by individuals bound by the Socializing way of knowing. We determine this by extrapolating and applying key ideas of constructive developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994; Kohlberg, 1969) and linking these to developmental perspectives on parenting and parental awareness (Newberger, 1980; Lickona, 1985).

Across the various components of the program, parents are encouraged to put themselves in the shoes of their children to understand the children; identify, interpret, and evaluate their children's motivations for their behavior and bring a developmental view to this understanding; anticipate their children's emotional responses to their reactions to their children's behavior; key into their children's internal emotional well-being, self-image, and the creation of trust, understanding, and respect in the parent–child relationship; set consistent limits; and observe, reflect on, and write about their behavior, successes, and difficulties enacting positive parenting practices. The preschool program staff and parenting education components present and demonstrate learning activities, adult and child behaviors, and adult expectations for children considered developmentally appropriate and well-matched to children's capacities.[8] Thus, we might describe the overall program (for parents and children) as oriented to a developmentally informed view of the nature of the child. This view seems shaped by Western perspectives on child rearing and represents a particular set of values.

When we analyze the program's values and perspective on child growth, learning, and guiding, we find these elements are predicated upon a third person perspective-taking that is emblematic of individuals bound by a Socializing way of knowing. The capacity to put oneself in the shoes of others is a hallmark of Socializing knowers and a cornerstone of being able to empathize with a child's psychological motivations (Newberger, 1980). The capacities for abstract thought and the ability to think about one's thinking undergirds an adult's ability to be internally psychologically self-observant and reflexive about one's parenting behaviors and to consider such notions as a child's self-image (Kegan, 1994). Furthermore, the entire developmental approach may be understood (and internalized) as a generalized compendium of socially sanctioned values concerning how one *should* conceive of child growth, development, learning, and teaching (Newberger, 1980).

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[8] We base our description of the program expectations upon discussions with the Even Start teachers, review of some materials specifically targeted to teaching discipline, and the reports of the learners who described their perspectives on the program's approach to discipline, teaching, and positive parent–child interactions.

An approach toward parenting education founded on a set of internalizable values and ideals is extremely compatible with Socializing knowers' tendency to take the social role norms and values of the psychosocial surround as their own. Yet not all of the learners we interviewed were operating solely from the Socializing position and poised to internalize these values. In particular, a few learners closer to the Instrumental side of the developmental continuum (those beginning the move into the Socializing way of knowing) seemed to relate differently to the program's perspective on discipline and did not "smoothly" internalize or unquestioningly adopt its values in this arena.

Developmental psychologists like to think that invitations to developmental growth depend on the interaction of one's experience and meaning frame. They believe developmental growth occurs when there are moderate discrepancies or disconfirmation between one's way of knowing (or interpretive framework) and experience (or in this case, the information, insights, and values of the program) (Kohlberg, 1981, Piaget, 1952). Yet, as we described earlier, such growth (or transformation of one's way of knowing) is frequently "resisted;" it is common for individuals to lean toward "the conservative impulse" (Marris, 1974, p. 8)—to internalize or make use of new information on behalf of one's current way of knowing (Kegan, 1994, p. 97). This may be at work in the ways individuals more bound by Instrumentalism differently relate to and take in the program teachings on discipline.

Let us recall Trudie and Yvette, two learners in the Even Start program who are devoted mothers seeking what's best for their children and actively guiding their children's behavior. These women, both from the Caribbean, are growing from Instrumentalism into a more Socializing way of knowing. We interviewed each of them three times over the span of nine months. When we initially met and spoke with them, they were both operating from the same developmental position.[9] Yet Trudie's and Yvette's responses to the discipline curriculum at Even Start seem somewhat different. Here, Yvette comments on the ways she is changing her discipline approach.

> [*So, do you think that as a parent, do you think that you've changed?*] Changed as a parent? . . . Yes. For some things, I changed because some things, some things I am impatient. . . . Yes, I am impatient. Sometime my son makes me crazy, you know? Sometimes it makes me crazy. And sometimes when I sometimes in the class [they] say if you calm down, if kids like to make trouble, calm down. If there is something and you don't like it talk to him. Talk to him and after when you calm down talk to him something you don't like, "don't do it anymore." You come to talk to that child. . . . Yes, but it's hard for me. . . I prayed to God he will change because he's

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[9] As mentioned elsewhere, we interviewed all of the Even Start students who participated in our study during three separate three-day sessions over a nine-month period. These sessions were conducted at the beginning of the study, during the middle of the data collection year, and at the end of the nine-month data collection period.

> too young. . . . Yes, I talk to him. Sometimes he says, "Mommy, I can do it." I say, ["do what I] tell you.". . . He forgot, and he says sometimes he forgot. When I ask him, I told you, "Don't do that.". . . but he like to run and run and run. . . . Yes, I'm changing, I pray to God. Sometimes I think I am patient, I try to be patient. . . . [*But is it helpful to talk to people here about when you feel impatient, need to calm down, need to talk to him?*] Yes. Sometimes you like to get another idea, you know? You have your idea but another person has an idea and can help you. . . . Yes it's a good idea, it can help you change . . . If you have a good idea, but maybe I can make the conversation with you, I can tell you my situation, you know? How I feel, why I am impatient. Maybe you can give me a good idea. Maybe that way you can tell me, maybe you can make it better.

In this interview excerpt, Yvette describes both her wish and her struggle to become more patient with her son. Listening to Yvette's words, we hear her striving to parent differently, to be more patient, to talk to her son, to calm down and not become so angry, to employ talking rather than hitting as a discipline approach. In this excerpt, Yvette seems inclined to incorporate the Even Start norms and values of discipline, limit-setting, and punishment. This approach, as we suggested, entails trying to listen to the child's perspective to understand his mind and motives; it is a child-focused view of development and behavior. We think it is safe to say that Yvette is reaching for these values, attempting to make them her own. We hear her struggle. From a developmental standpoint, we understand part of her struggle as related to her developmental position. Yvette takes in these child-focused values and ideals in a somewhat rule-bound, concrete, "how-to" way and she is quite successful in doing this. Yvette is tracking her own behaviors differently now. For example, she states that her son makes her crazy, and she knows she needs to calm down and talk to him about his misbehavior. The Even Start program seems to have helped her develop this strategy. She also seeks advice from friends and peers when she feels stuck. She now expresses her own feelings, explains why she is impatient, and enlists others to give her "a good idea . . . and make it better" to help her resolve her situation. With this more "how-to approach" and peer scaffolding through advice, she is better able to regulate her actions and reactions to her son. However, she seems reliant on external rule-based, and concrete supports to both maintain new behaviors and change old ones. She has not yet completely internalized these new values. Or perhaps these interviews do not provide the evidence to contest this claim.

As developmental psychologists, we are not surprised by Yvette's orientation. As she is transitioning into the Socializing way of knowing, she is simultaneously bound to a more concrete interpretation of information *and* wants to internalize the values of the social surround. Yvette demonstrates one developmental response to new information: utilizing and incorporating new parenting strategies that get the results that meet her need and desire for her child's good behavior. This is the more Instrumental side of the process Yvette is undergoing. Yet she also employs these strategies in a way that helps her check her child's motives and stay aligned with the approval of the peers and classmates who promote this child-focused view of discipline. This is a sort of Instrumental approach to beginning to internalize another's (her son's, her classmates,' and her teachers') perspective as implicitly mattering to the self.

As we have suggested, we surmise that the Even Start parenting curriculum targets and rewards a parenting approach premised on mutuality, empathy, and parents' ability to take in and internalize their child's perspective as a guide for their own behaviors and beliefs. Thus we might say the parenting curriculum "pushes on" the more Socializing aspects of the transition between Instrumentalism and a more Socializing way of knowing. Kegan (1994) has written about the Socializing mind's unique and defining capacities for internalization, which distinguish this way of knowing's logic from both the Instrumentalist and Self-Authoring perspectives. He writes,

> The [Socializing] consciousness amounts to the psychological threshold for what sociologists call "socialization": we become truly a part of society . . . when society has become truly a part of us. Our capacity to internalize, and identify with, the values and beliefs of our social "surround"—as these may be communicated by family, peer group, state, religion, ethnic class, geographic region, or social position—makes us inductable into the commonweal. (p.76)

Yvette seems on her way to being inducted into U.S. child-rearing practices. Yet, listening to Trudie's understanding of parenting, we hear a slightly different response and impulse concerning the incorporation of a more U.S. culture–focused view of discipline. If, as we suggest, the Even Start curriculum invites, expects, and rewards a Socializing mind's orientation to parenting, how is it that Trudie, who shares Yvette's developmental position, does not seem to strive to become the same sort of inductee? Before moving on to this question and a possible way to think about the differences in their responses, we present and interpret Trudie's view of discipline.

> My children is important to me because I brought them in the world . . . so I'm going to care for them . . . They're my blood, they're my heart . . . they are very important for me. . . . What I mean care? I mean care for giving care, all kind of care, feed them, be there for them, talk to them, and try to understand them to make them happy. . . . [have] a chance to talk with them . . . [about] lot of things, when I was a child. How I grown up. Ya, because you different culture. I'm from Caribbean, I'm their mother, they gonna realize this is a different culture, I tell them how to listen in school, how to behave, how not to be. I'm raising them different . . . They don't pay very much attention. Sometimes I don't feel happy, but what can I do? [*So do you think that they'll be ok if they only know American culture?*] Not bad, but I would like them to learn this, tell them about my country . . . Back home kids learn [behavior] and back home even they are not your family, but if you're in the street, you cannot swear. If you swear they gonna see that, they will punish you and when they punish you, your parents will be happy . . . you cannot punish them here, here . . . you cannot discipline your kids physically. Everybody here is the same. [*So here it sounds like you can't punish your kids physically, but at your home country you could, and not only could, but it's expected. . . . If you took your home country way of doing things and said, "Well, they may not do it here in America, but I'm from a different culture and that's what I do?*] But they would call that child abuse. [*Is one way better than the other?*] Even some time you are to talk to the child, if you tell them and they won't listen, you have to punish them . . . they did not listen. . . . [*So you just have to do what people do around you?*] Mhmm . . . [*So here you don't do it so much because you're worried about what other people would think?*] They report to the teacher. [*They'd report you?*]
>
> [*So you were talking about the different ways you were taking care of your kids, and you said, feeding them, being there for them, listening to them, trying to understand them. Can you say a little more about why that's important?*] Because you are the parent, first one to contact, it's you. . . . Because my mother used to do the same

> thing, so I'm filling that . . . I'm the mother, and this is the way my mother raised me . . . when they talk to me about something, you have to understand the situation, what they need. How they feel. Is important to know the person, they can talk to you . . . It's better than don't talk to you, and let them go out and talk to their friends. . . . I'm angry with my son, not every day sometimes . . . my son, when I tell him to do something he doesn't do it. When I tell him not to go out with his friends, he listen to me, but when I'm not there, . . . he does things that make me angry, sometimes. . . . [*He disobeyed you. Does it matter why he went out?*] Doesn't matter why, because you have to listen to your mother. She say not go out, you don't go out . . . I always tell him, "you wait til I come in and you tell me why you want to go out." . . . children have to obey their parents and you have a good life, you will be blessing and live long. . . . He won't be a good person, what you gonna, learn your kids for future, if you always [dis]obey your mother, things goes once coming back.

Listening to Trudie's words, it's clear that she dearly loves her children. They are important to her. They are her blood, her heart, part of her. Like Yvette, her understanding of care entails both instrumental concrete ideas and more abstract notions. Trudie articulates this range, describing care as feeding her children, talking to them, trying to understand them to be able to make them happy. She also believes it's important to have her children talk to her and, when they do, that she tries to understand the situation. These seem to be steps toward or possible demonstrations of her desire to take her children's perspective and understand their motives; these are the elements of her orientation to care that reflect a more Socializing way of knowing. Yet, here, too, the practical aspects co-exist. Trudie wants her children to talk to her so they don't "go out and talk to their friends." Having her children feel able to talk to her relates to their emotional well-being but also has a practical value and result: They don't ask others for advice, maintaining her authority. In another interview, Trudie articulates a similar vision of caring for her children, again incorporating both the concrete and more abstract meanings of "being there" for her kids. Here, she delineates the ways she orients to her children's needs, emotions, and behaviors.

> I'm always there for my kids . . . Meaning time, I'm making time to talk to them, joke with them, and to tell them what's good, what's wrong, what's bad to do. So certain things is not appropriate to do outside, inside, or in school. Talk to them . . . their mind so they can tell me if they're not happy with something that's in the house or in school."

In Trudie's words we hear a dedication to listening to and nurturing her children. In keeping with her developmental position, Trudie focuses on the practical definitions of "being there" for her children (making time, joking, advice-giving) *and* includes some slightly more internally oriented approaches to taking her child's view into consideration.

Like Yvette, Trudie struggles to have her children listen to her and conform to the behaviors she wants. Trudie seems to have a different view of discipline than Yvette. Trudie adheres to what she articulates as the American way of discipline and does not physically punish her children. However, although she does not enact the disciplinary approach of her home country, which sanctions physical intervention, she *does* believe in it. Trudie appears to feel comfortable holding these two distinct views of guiding. It is almost as if she keeps both cultures' orientations on separate bands of experience, or perhaps they are somewhat compartmentalized and rule-bound. When in the U.S., she follows its method; in her home country, she might use its approach. Unlike Yvette, Trudie does not seem to strive to be inducted into what she perceives as the U.S. child-rearing approach as much as she seems to want to avoid any difficulties by following the rules. The Instrumental aspect of Trudie's way of knowing may enable or facilitate this sort of compartmentalization to keep norms or values more rule-bound and context specific. Only when a person's consciousness is under the full sway of the Socializing way of knowing are ideals or values internalized in a more abstract *and* generalized way.

We still need to account for the fact that, while both women are operating from the same developmental position and are growing from Instrumentalism, one leans toward internalizing the Even Start teachings on discipline and one seems to identify more with her home culture's practices. This is especially interesting, given some critical literacy theorists' critiques of family literacy curricula.

Critical literacy theorists (Auerbach, 1997; Street, 1997; Taylor, 1997) maintain that some family literacy programs homogenize learners' cultural beliefs and literacy and parenting practices. They assert that in the process of acculturating into U.S. life and through their educational experiences, ESOL learners frequently strive to "fit in." In so doing, these individuals lose connection to and appreciation for their own culture. Street (1997) goes further in suggesting that some learners are unaware of abandoning their culture and do not understand and value their cultural background. These theorists particularly criticize the teaching of Western normative values and emphasize the use of basic school practices in the home setting as a way to foster literacy development for adults and children.

In our study, not all learners blindly take in the programs' values or teachings. For the most part, an individual's developmental position predicts these differences. However, in our study, we also find that many learners *do* strive to internalize the Even Start teachings and enthusiastically adopt its parenting and educational practices. Yvette, as we've noted, struggles to take in and use the developmental child-focused values of the program. Yet, to say these learners internalize the program's values and thereby discount or homogenize their own cultural heritage seems to overlook another important influence the learners described. Listening closely to the narratives of the students, we find their personal history and cultural experience with discipline and learning and perceived understanding of their home culture's stance on children's development implicates and importantly guides how they relate to, take in, and use the information to which they are exposed. Family literacy researcher Vivian Gadsden (1996) makes a similar observation. She writes about the influence of families' beliefs and cultural practices upon an individual's perspective.

> Family cultures . . . provide the individual family member with a way of constructing their futures **within or oppositional** to the life-course trajectory of the family. [These family cultures include], approaches to literacy, relationships among parents, children and other family members and expectations within the family.[10] (p. 2, emphasis ours)

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[10] Gadsden (1996, p. 2) defines family cultures as entailing "collections of beliefs, practices, and approaches" to literacy and interpersonal relations to which "family members contribute from which they extract" ideas, ideals, which are also modified over the "life-course of the family."

We next explore the ways that these learners' personal experiences, in combination with their developmental positions, incline them to respond to the program's teachings. We highlight the ways these learners may adopt and internalize wholly new views of parenting; consolidate or elaborate their own compatible perspectives; or assess, critique, and integrate different curricular elements they like.

Perspectives on Teaching and Guiding

Growing from Instrumental Ways of Knowing

Following the rules of the cultural context

To aid this exploration of the intersection of developmental position, personal experience, and the internalization of ideas, ideals, and perspectives on ideology, we return to Yvette's struggle to develop patience and avoid hitting her children, and her orientation to their emotional happiness. To understand the possible differences underlying Yvette's friendliness or disposition to take in more Western values of child rearing when Trudie seems not to have such an impulse, we look at Yvette's account of her own childhood experiences of discipline and learning, and her views/recollections of parental support.

> Where I come from they have . . . **it's different discipline. But over here you know it's very hard to discipline your child**. . . . Sometimes in my country you have to hurt the child for something they do. **But I think that not good idea to hurt** [for] something. If your child makes something wrong, you can sit down with them, to explain, you can explain how you can make that, you know, you can teach them. "It's not good to do some, to do this," you know, you can talk and not hurt them in anything. . . . If they do something wrong then you talk, you talk, but if you do it again you can make the rule for that time. You make very serious the rule, "if you do it that time, I can hurt you, but I don't want that thing." You explain, you don't like that, you know, you make her understand that you don't like it. "If you do it again, for three times, maybe I can punish you, you know, that way, I can, if you do it again because I do it two times, I told you." I don't want to . . . **I mean if you talk you have a good relationship with your kid and then it can work**. But if you have not good relationship and something that happened and you hurt something, that wouldn't work. . . . [*Uh huh. So is it ever hard . . . to do this discipline with your child, I'm wondering.*] Yes, it's very hard, but something, when something happened, I . . . but I calm down. I don't let my child see that. . . . I'm upset, I calm down. After I talking about it. "I don't want you doing, I don't like being upset, but I don't like this mess you make. I really don't want this happen again. Because I don't want, to hurt you, I try to help you."
>
> [*So what happens when you have so many ideas about what to do with your children . . . how do you decide which one you're going to use?*] If I have to make a rule for something . . . I talk to my husband, after, we talk together, with the kids. You can have different idea. If I have one, you have another one, maybe another one who help . . . the good one you have, you can take one . . . the rule I can make after you know each other what you can do. . . . But if you think about what ways is good . . .

> You see what is happening, you can get your ideas what has happened, you can get his idea, his idea can work better. . . . But you do have to be very strong to your child. But you have to, you know, **if you are very strong, strong, maybe the child scared for something someday he has to tell you**. . . . [*So it makes your child more comfortable if you're not so strong when . . . ?*] Yeah! Not so strong, more comfortable. . . . **Like in my culture, my mother, everything, I like to talk to my mother. But not my father. Everyday strong, everyday, you can say, maybe he can hurt you for something. But my mother, I can explain, I can tell you, maybe you can do that, but [not] my father . . . you scared to tell [him] something. . . .** [*And you don't want your children to be scared to tell you something*] No! "If you have something, you can tell me. Not go to your friend. You know, you tell me everything." . . . You have to know everything, **a good relationship, if something happen, [your child will be] relaxed and comfortable to tell you.**

Closely reading Yvette's depiction of her relationship with her parents, we find a possible reason why she may be disposed to adopt and use the Even Start approach to disciplining children. Her personal experience of being frightened to talk with her own father, fearful of being physically punished may direct her away from this mode of guiding. That she felt comfortable telling her own mother everything seems particularly important to Yvette, and she equates it with having a good parent–child relationship. Yvette seems to want to ensure this sort of good relationship with her own children. In fact, Yvette emphasizes it's important to have a good relationship with her children so they, too, will feel "relaxed and comfortable" about telling her everything.

Interpreting Yvette's story through a developmental perspective, we might say her move toward the Socializing way of knowing readies her to internalize the norms and values of the psychosocial surround. However, Yvette may be particularly inclined to adopt the Even Start parenting norms because these are more syntonic with the lessons she draws from her personal history, i.e., it's important to have a good, communicative parenting relationship lacking fear. The Even Start discipline approach may promote parenting strategies Yvette prefers and sees as useful in helping her son feel comfortable talking with her, the way she felt comfortable talking with her mother. Thus by eventually internalizing the Even Start view of discipline, Yvette would be able to simultaneously reject her father's approach and maintain her alignment with and develop her mother's teachings and values. Identifying with her children's fearful response to harsh punishment and needing to discipline differently than her father may actually amplify her readiness and inclination to make a developmental and philosophical transition. This is an example of the powerful intersection of developmental position and personal experience. Moreover, we believe the "discipline curriculum" of Even Start challenges Yvette to move toward this transition. We note that the supportive parent discussion group structure scaffolds her and further motivates her to try these parenting strategies that may receive social approval.

It is interesting to remember that Trudie, too, describes the salience of her mother's teachings. She's raising her children as she was raised. Yet her personal experience seems to incline her to maintain a preference for her own culture's norms and approach to discipline. While we surmise that the differences in the two women's stances have much to do with the interplay of developmental position, cultural norm, and family and personal experience, we are also aware that Trudie is in a different classroom much of the time and entertain the possibility that there may be a slightly different focus or weight placed on discussing and using specific discipline ideals in each class.

The Socializing Way of Knowing

"Fitting In"—Responses to the norms and values of the cultural and classroom context

As we have previously asserted, in contrast to the learners who are growing away from Instrumentalism, those students bound by the Socializing way of knowing share a developmentally driven tendency to be "inducted into the commonweal" (Kegan, 1994, p. 76). Most of the learners operating from this way of knowing speak enthusiastically about the teachings of the Even Start program's parenting education component and understand them as helping to strengthen their parenting. Many report changes in the ways they approach discipline and teach their children.

Once again, we suggest these changes are not about abandoning their own cultural practices or family beliefs. In many cases, these changes served to develop and consolidate the learners' emergent values or augment and elaborate their family of origin's views. In a few cases, the Even Start teachings seem to validate and consolidate personally held values that opposed the beliefs of their families or home country. In only one case did a student completely substitute the Even Start perspective on discipline and teaching for her home country's parenting values and educational practices.

"Fitting In"—Aligning with, consolidating, and elaborating family of origin beliefs and values

Elena, an ABE learner from the Caribbean, is the mother of two young children. New to the U.S., she finds the Even Start parenting curriculum helpful in maintaining and enacting her mother's values and nurturing, child-focused view of child rearing. Elena describes having changed and strengthened her parenting abilities. She, too, feels she's become more patient with her children. Like many learners, she reports developing a strong belief in the value of reading. This is new, but a view her mother holds and communicates. Even Start has been extremely important to Elena's overcoming the parenting difficulties she has encountered after moving to the U.S. Elena depicts her struggle to be the parent she would like to be after losing the considerable social supports, scaffolding, and parenting help her family—in particular, her mother—provided.

> Well, before, I remember . . . **I wanted to be more patient, because I lose my patience always with them.** And I think I this year I've been living here, my patience has improved a lot. [*Why do you think?*] Maybe because I know, like you realize this is your life and you have to be more patient, and you know because in my country I have so many people who can help me with them, my mother, my sister. And so I was like losing my patience. If my mother was there, I just leave them with my mother, you know. Here I know I have to be with them. I'm the only one . . .
>
> It's something not that I learn here, but I see it here, that I'm not very patient with my kids, you know. . . . And I see here that everybody, I'm not the only one, you know. That everybody in my situation the same as me, like because it's my life changed 100 percent. **When I was in my country, it was very different**. . . . Like,

> if I was tired, my mother do something . . . she can help me with everything. I have somebody who helped me with my children, too . . . **I mean here, in the beginning when I moved, I said, "Oh my God, I'm going to get crazy,"** really because my neighbors were complaining that my children were making a lot of noise. In my home country, we lived in a house, we had no neighbors close. They could run, they could play, they could do whatever they want. They can yell, like normal children does. When I moved to here, just a little noise, my neighbors were complaining. . . . **At the beginning I was like, "What should I do?"** . . . I never hit my children or anything like that, I just tell them, "Go to your room." . . . And then I realized, I was telling them all the time, "No, no, no," you know. Everything was, "No."
>
> **And I think I'm going to frustrate them if I keep doing the way I'm doing now.** Because I am telling them all the time, "Don't run, don't step, don't jump on the floor, don't do that. Don't drop your toys." You know, I'm not talking to an adult. **But sometimes I think, I'm getting so hard, like to myself, you know.** That shouldn't be.
>
> Like, I get worried very easily. So I was trying to keep them quiet, and also I didn't want to strike them . . . like how can I make my little one understand he cannot run, you know? . . . **The stress was that I never like to bother anybody . . . I mean, I always get in the other person's position,** you know? . . . That's something I think I have. **I try to have everything inside of me. I'd rather hurt me than hurt anybody.**
>
> So, I'm alone with my kids. I'm not used to take care of them the whole day, you know? . . . Everything they do, I mean everything they do, I have to do it for them. And in my house, my mother used to help me so much . . . Yeah, it's very hard for me. But I have to handle it.

In these excerpts, we hear Elena's dedication as a mother. Now in a new country and unaccustomed to parenting alone, she strives to manage her frustration and be sensitive to her children's developmental needs, under trying circumstances. Part of Elena's distress is located in her developmental capacity to put herself in her children's emotional/psychological shoes as well as in her capacity to monitor her own actions. Thus, she realizes her attempts to control her children seem unreasonable. Her children's feelings about being disciplined matters to her deeply and implicates her feelings about the way she guides them. These responses are indicative of her developmental position, in which one is oriented to the way others respond to and perceive the self. Yet the very strengths of this way of knowing—the capacity for empathy, mutuality, and attention to pleasing others—seem to cause Elena even more distress in her new role as sole parent. Wanting to please competing parties (her neighbors and her children), she's increasingly worried and stressed. How can she keep her children quiet and support their growth and simultaneously comply with her neighbor's demands? Elena reflects on her behavior and worries she's "getting so hard" with her children. She seems to be in a psychological bind, attempting and desiring to meet everyone's expectations. In fact, she may feel torn. She'd rather hurt herself than anybody else. And she may be doubly stressed because she is without accustomed social support. These stresses call into question Elena's perceptions of her parenting competence and even her social identity as a parent. Thus, Elena seems to seek models for being with her children and directing their play for long spans of time. The Even Start home visitor program has been critical to helping Elena manage her frustration, meet her children's developmental needs, and spend prolonged time with her children in a positive manner.

> Because she **[the home visitor] spends one hours with me while my kids is playing so I can get ideas how to play and how to spend time with my kids** . . . the home visitor, she always read a book or two books. Also she plays with them, with toys she brings. So when sometimes I was like frustrated with my kids, that I felt, "Oh my God, I'm going to get crazy" because they are, like, inside of a little apartment, just two small kids and me and cold weather outside, it's, like, hard. . . . **So I learned from her that I could help, how I can play with them and maintain them like busy, and we are enjoying what we are doing.**

Learning how to spend time with her children is an important change, Elena reports. By adopting ideas taught in the Even Start program, Elena is developing her own competence to enact the parenting style and values her mother modeled for her. These new models of activity and interaction help Elena parent independently. In particular, Elena links learning to spend time with her children with learning about the value of reading. Several of the Even Start parents report such an appreciation, and almost all comment on the way they've internalized this new value, seemingly distinct to the U.S. Nevertheless, for Elena, spending time with her children helps her fulfill the values she's gleaned from her mother.

> **And also my mother taught me how to be. Everything I know, everything I am, she was the one who was there taking me everyplace. . . . And I think my mother taught me most of the things I am now** . . . [*So do you think of her when you work with your children? Do you have her in your mind?*] Oh, yes. . . . Like, she does the same thing I do, you know, like, teaches them what's right, what's wrong, don't do that, be careful, things like that. That's to keep them, they're only young, like, they are not going to understand. I mean they think, but the things that are for their age. She always calls me and tells me, "I hear the news that it's very good to read to your children." You know, in our home country, we don't encourage parents to read with their kids.
>
> Something really, really important to me is the way I raise my children, and I think **this program has helped me a lot how to raise my children,** because when I was living back in my country, I never read to them. Like I thought they were too little. And they wouldn't understand, and I was busy in my own life. And so being here has helped me a lot, because I have to be just with them, I have no family . . . This program teaches you a lot what to do with your children. How to play with them . . . And the way that it most helps is in the way that it encourages you to read to your children every day, which are good books to read to them. **And reading helps them to open their minds, teach them that you care for them, because you've given them your time, you know? You care for them, because you've given them your time. So they feel that love.** And that's something real important for

> every human being. . . . **the most important thing is that they see that we love them,** we're giving them our time to read to them. They're also learning about what the book says, and reading to them encourages them to, I mean, they learn how to read. They want to read a book, for them.
>
> **I try to give them all the love I can, but I never read to them before and, like, I never spent like a lot of time just being with them, listening what they need . . .** So this program helped me, how to, use this time to teach them instructive things . . .
>
> [*How do you feel about education now, having been in Even Start?*] I think my feelings have changed a lot. Because in the aspect of reading to my children, I mean there, they don't encourage you to read. They just go to school, they learn how to read, write, you know. Not like here. Here, everybody's so focused on their children's education. I mean, children's education is so important here. It just amazed me. And it's so good, you know.

Several of the mothers demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing emphasize the value of education for their children. In a way that's developmentally distinct from their peers, they conceive of teaching and learning with their children as important to building relational closeness, to teaching care and love, as Elena suggests above. This focus on reading and engaging in educational and even school-based practices in their homes to solidify and deepen emotional bonds seems reflective of the Socializing parent's attention to their children's psychological and social well-being. It is a similar focus to one we noted earlier in these learner's construals of helping their children with their homework.

Prizing education as important to one's enhanced possibility and, in particular, the internalizing and recognizing reading as an important activity is syntonic with several learners' families' and specifically, their mothers' value of education. In a striking way, a number of women recalled the power of their mothers' support for their education. As they told it, their mothers' encouragement was key to their own development.

Raquelle is one such parent. She believes in supporting her son's education. This is a value she has internalized from her mother.

> [*How did you learn so much about how to help your child be a good student?*] Oh, you know, I try because when I was little, my mother doesn't know how to read, how to write; my father didn't know how to read. He know how to write a little bit . . . We can be a better person, like now I'm working really hard . . . to come here to learn more. **But my mother, she's a real courageous lady. . . . because even if she don't know herself, she always try for us.** When we were little, she paid people to help us do homework. If some of us don't pass for the year, she send you to someone to help you . . . So I try myself. I can read, I can write, and so on. So I try to raise my son different, because she wasn't able to read with me when I was little, with us, when we was little. . . . **You the parent are supposed to try** even you don't know as if to help the kid or if you do something but or something wasn't good when you was a kid, you don't want your kids to do the same thing. Because

> the life is different, and their future going to be different, and you doesn't want them to repeat the same mistakes you make then.

For Raquelle, the Even Start instruction on how parents can help their children read, do math, and engage in fun learning activities in the home implicitly validates, promotes, and expands her ability and desire "to raise her son different." While she may internalize the parenting curriculum in a "how to" sort of way, learning these methods to help her son read and do his homework connects to and allows her to enact a larger set of transgenerational values about the importance of education. Specifically, the educational practices she learns through Even Start enable her to be her son's model of educational support, much the way her mother was an inspiration and role model. However, Raquelle wants to teach her child in a way her mother, who was not literate, could not. Thus, we suggest that, by incorporating the Even Start teaching practices, Raquelle is building her social identity as a parent in a way continuous with her own and her mother's values about the importance of education. She is not abandoning the values she acquired from her family of origin in her home country. Rather, she is strengthening, consolidating, and elaborating her parental role as her son's teacher in ways that align with her own mother's unrealized hopes and dreams. We find this particularly interesting, given the critical theorists' critiques (Auerbach, 1997; Street, 1997; Taylor, 1997) of the use of school-based practices in the home and their concern about students being inducted into U.S. host culture literacy beliefs and family practices. In Raquelle's opinion, these practices are helpful to enacting her parenting values and aspirations for her son's learning. In her interviews, she recounts the support she's derived from the Even Start program.

> Before, I always wanted him to read books, but with this program, I am able to sit down with him and ask what is the book about. Ask him what the author is, and what the purpose of the book and ask him some details. **Before, I could only tell him, "Go read the books." But now I know how to sit down with him.**

Emblematic of those learners bound by the Socializing way of knowing, Raquelle internalizes the Even Start curriculum components *as models* of teaching and learning. Modeling values and viewing oneself as a role model for how a child will relate to education is characteristic of these learners and different from a more Instrumental interpretation of education, in which a parent might incorporate information about reading or learning in a rule-bound, concrete, strategic way. Raquelle understands herself to be a role model motivating her son to do his homework. In providing this educational support to her son and using the skills she learned in the Even Start program, she is consolidating and embodying her mother's belief about the importance of education.

> I said, "You see, I'm doing my homework, so that's why you have to do your homework." And he is very, very good in doing his homework.

Parents operating from the Socializing way of knowing appear to teach their children the way they are taught. In other words, they import the way their teachers have taught them as a guide in educating and sharing information with their children. Furthermore, these adults seem to apply the same criteria to themselves that they apply to their teachers. When asked, "What makes a good teacher?" (a topic we will discuss more fully later, when we explore the idea of learning supports), many of these students remarked that they wanted their teachers to be able to teach information multiple ways and attentive to their learning style. Here, Raquelle reports learning a similar way of connecting to and supporting her son's unique learning solutions.

> We have a workshop on Friday each week. The second grade teacher. He shows us how to help our kids and how to do math with them. There are many ways to show it to them. So, they try to show you a way they know so you know how to stay and listen to them [the children] . . . the teacher explains the way they [the children] know. You can show them your way. . . . Show the different ways, not saying to them "your way is not good.". . . Any way you can solve the problem, you know.

Raquelle is receptive to the experiential learning approach Even Start offers its parents and children. Several learners who demonstrate a Socializing way of knowing comment on and enthusiastically adopt this new philosophy of learning. Moreover, we do not hear such comments in the interviews of those parents growing from Instrumentalism. We believe the Socializing learners' capacity for generalization and abstraction, and their ability to think about thinking enables them to take an appreciative perspective on the value of this new mode of learning. These parents identify and understand the experiential approach as a distinct model or philosophy of instruction rather than regard the program activities as separate or effective practical strategies for enhanced parent involvement or child management. Here, Raquelle comments on the way she understands her son learning in an active, contextualized way that's quite different from how she was taught as a child and now prefers. Striking in Raquelle's words is her recognition that in undertaking this new way of teaching she is adopting a new teaching and learning philosphy that is integrative, interactive, and developmentally sensitive to her son's intellectual growth. Although she is internalizing the Even Start approach as her own, we suggest an important part of her appreciation for this mode of learning and teaching is fueled by her desire to be the best possible teacher for her son. In so doing, she is better able to fulfill her mother's ardent belief that parents support the education of their children.

> And what I like for the kids, you know, in those days, in my age, we didn't have too much freedom like the little kids to do certain things. And here, in this program, when you are cooking something or if you try to make playdough, the kids can mix it with you . . . they can measure and they can start thinking about this when they are little.

"Fitting In"—Developing parenting values in opposition to family of origin beliefs and practices

Not all of the learners operating from a Socializing way of knowing sought to parent the ways their families did. Both Anna and Felicia recounted personal histories of problematic and disappointing child rearing, inclining them to develop more nurturant and nonpunitive relations with their own children. In a sense, the Even Start program offered these women an opportunity to internalize different models of discipline and parent–child interactions than they'd witnessed as children. While (as we have suggested many times before), adults bound by a Socializing way of knowing are especially disposed to take in the values of the social surround, the Even Start child-focused parenting philosophy may validate and support the women's move away from familial practices and values they found undesirable.

Across their interviews, both Anna and Felicia emphasize wanting to understand their children, make them happy, and be in tune with them emotionally. This focus on their children's psychological well-being is typical of the way Socializing knowers orient to their children's world (Newberger, 1980). These parents characteristically define their parental "success" through harmonious parent–child relations. Moreover, Socializing parents' feelings of competence are often determined by their children's approval of their actions (Kegan, 1994). We wonder whether the emphasis these women place on relational in-tuneness and parent–child mutuality is accentuated by the combination of their developmental position *and* their personal history—specifically, their reaction against difficult childhood experiences they perceived as less than nurturant. Their childhood experiences direct them to prize and create affirming relationships with their children in which their daughters or sons feel validated and understood.

For Anna, both understanding her children and having them understand the values she is trying to teach are key components to developing a nurturing relationship.

> Try to talk to them [children] until they can really understand. Sometimes I think kids just don't understand, or they [the parents] don't have each one [their children] to understand. And I think parents shouldn't give up. If you just talk to a kid, and they don't listen, that doesn't mean that you are supposed to give up on them, you know? Keep helping them, until [they] understand.

In her interviews, Anna recalls the distress of witnessing her relatives harshly physically punish a male cousin. These recollections have stayed with her and undergird her desires to parent differently and adopt alternative approaches to discipline, as intimated to above.

> My relatives used to, how do you say, kick, no, whipping my cousin. Yeah, I don't do that, cause I hate when they do that . . . I hate it when they spank . . . I think there's other ways you can punish the child for doing something. You don't have to spank. I remember, one day she . . . still today this is in my mind and I feeling shocked . . . he beating so much . . . and then he cry. I said, I'm not going to hit my kids.

Felicia too, depicted a story of disappointment. Here she describes how she felt her mother could not provide what she needed and how she therefore wants to offer her children what she did not receive as a child. Felicia describes the way the Even Start program has helped her develop and consolidate her goal to parent differently than her mother.

> We have a very good relationship with my childrens . . . So I want, everything for my children. I want you know, the best, the best thing. So, I'm try to be the good mother. . . . **before when I was young, I couldn't get, I couldn't get something, what my mother couldn't give me. I want to give everything for my children,** so that 's why I'm try to do everything for them, what they can help. **I don't want them to have my experience, you know? [*And do you feel that, since you've started at Even Start?*] Yeah, because we talk a lot about that.** We talk about discipline. We talk about how we can be good mother. We talk about reading book because. . . . in my country, it's unusual to read a books for the children's. They don't use too much this kind of relationship. But over here, everybody books, you know. And my children's love books . . .
>
> A month ago I think, we start to talk about discipline. It was beautiful because each parents start to tell their own experience. Every parents was to share how they

> handled the problem, if for them work, how they children said, everything . . . And we talk a lot about that. We share experience, and we get a lot of advices too, from my teacher and from anybody. So it was beautiful because you know, when somebody's parents all the time, **for me, I need to learn how can I help my son. How can I educate my son. I want the best for my children's.** I want to give them the very good education. So I don't want to see my son or my daughter like to, you know, bad kids, so it was beautiful. . . . Because I learn a lot. I am feeling like too, "oh I'm not the only person what happened to me." They give some some advices and they give me some ideas. **What can I try to, you know, to educate, to discipline my children's,** what kind of ways can do when my childrens misbehave . . . Sometimes they work, sometimes no . . . So I keep trying many things what they can help me. So in that class about the discipline we learn about a lot. . . . Everybody talk about what we can do . . . **how the kids feeling, how we can teach the kids feeling for [others]** . . . [*Do you feel like they're good ideas when you try them?*] Yeah, definitely, **because I'm agree with.**

Learning ways to help their children (within the realm of discipline or through learning together) supports Anna and Felicia in their identity as nurturing, understanding, empathic parents. Neither mother wants to rely on authoritarian or harsh, punitive approaches to parenting. Like Elena, both women interpret teaching and working with their children as means to establish and deepen their closeness with them. Once again, we note an overlap of developmental position and personal experience. Specifically, we discern the coincidence between the developmentally driven orientation toward mutuality (here understood as closeness) and these women's desire to establish a parent–child relationship predicated upon meeting their children's emotional and psychological needs. We hypothesize this desire is fueled by Anna's and Felicia's reported childhood histories of not having their needs met and witnessing distressing forms of punishment.

When asked to comment on which of the five components of the Even Start program she found most helpful, Felicia has difficulty choosing. But her belief in developing a close bond is the key to her selection.

> Well, everything is important to me. All five parts are very good. But if I need to choose one of them, I think it's the relation, the part when we have a children's and parents [parent and child time]. Yeah, I like it. Because we spend the time with our children's for different things, like, we made things; we share everything. . . . The whole parents stay with the kids, we share, we sing, we read a book, we have some activities so parents, children do. The childrens draw. We cut. So we do many kind activities. So, you know it's a . . . **I'm feeling so close with my son, and my son feeling close with me. We share many things. That's what I mean.** Yeah, and we can learn how we can read a book for our children's because the teacher read for them. . . . **We make like this feeling, to my son is feeling more close to me.** And he feeling like to . . . he saw me like to another friend, not really mom. Mom, friend, everything . . . I don't know in English the word, sorry.

Anna, too, strives to maintain closeness by helping her children and through activities she learns from Even Start's home visitor program.

> **Kids always like to feel like their parents understand or can do things** . . . You can read together with your kids. They [the home visitor] bring you books, stories, and you can sit down. Like, we sit down here and can read together with your kids.
>
> Like working together, like, we can make things, then your child can give you an idea about you can explain to them what you doing and then help. . . . I think you should pay attention to the kids, sometimes they need help, sometimes when my kids come to me and ask me to do things, **I leave everything and try to help them.**

"Fitting In"—Substituting program parenting values

Sarita is from Southern Asia and the mother of a young boy in the Even Start preschool program. Like Felicia, she is an ESOL learner. However, Sarita is the one parent operating from the Socializing way of knowing who does seem to substitute the Even Start programs approach and values for those she previously held. Unlike other students in this developmental position, she does not recount stories about the way her family taught or disciplined her. Thus, we do not really know whether Sarita's adoption of the Even Start approach to education and discipline reflects a consolidation of her own family's values, a move toward developing values set in opposition to that which her family believed, or the internalization of a wholly new outlook toward parenting.

It appears she is developing a completely novel understanding of children's developmental needs and a new insight into how children may learn through experience. For Sarita, this exposure seems revelatory. Here, Sarita compares the Even Start approach to teaching and learning with that of her home country.

> **In my country, it's different. They teach a different way**. . . . Because in my country, they have a book for, for example, like, children they have maybe, first year, they have particular book, you have to they say, you can read this page, 1 ,2 , 3. You have to remember and . . . **you have to memorize it. . . . And in my country, like this. They teach that way. And in this country, it's very different. They don't have any particular book that you have to read** . . . they're playing. They're playing but they learn something, you know, children. . . . Maybe they're playing counting and alphabet. Alphabet is they're playing the singing. But they learn, also they learn alphabet. You know, A B C D—it's like a song. Yeah, he [her son] feels happy. Children, **they don't pressure their minds. They're playing but they learn something. . . . But in my country, it's like pressure.**
>
> **In my country when children goes to school just read, read and write and like only, all day. They have to. No playing, no any other activity,** just read and writing like that. **And here you have recess time, you have free time, you have many activities. You know they learn. I think in my country and here, it's here, children's learn many things** . . . if they are playing but they learn

> something. . . . You know, like they play with blocks . . . there's many shapes, triangles, circle, and it's like that. Just they play, but they want to teach us that they say , "Oh, square, and so triangle.". . . **They never forced the children, but in my country I think they force them.** And you know, [here] we play with the dice and penny, they learn change. How to make change and what, which one quarter, which one dime, what it's like, they learn like dice, they learn count. . .
>
> When we meet with children and how you feel as children, and children bring many activity, and we have them, and **I learn many things about like here how to teach children.**
>
> [*Can you think of something or a way in which you have changed the most as a parent since you started?*] **You know, if I force him, he don't, he doesn't learn. He maybe he learn, and he forget it. If I learn about the playing and like here, and they can learn, and they can understand.**

Sarita has observed the way her son learns in his Even Start preschool classroom. She believes this experiential, interactive, mutual, relational form of learning and education is the most worthwhile and is most beneficial to true learning. Through interactive discovery, children learn and understand; when forced, they forget. She adopts this approach to teach her son. Here, it seems she *is* internalizing a wholly new philosophy of the way learning happens. She is ripe to do so, given the developmental tendency to take in others' values as her own, a benchmark feature of the Socializing way of knowing. Also fascinating is that Sarita seems to be internalizing a new perspective on the respective roles of women and children. In particular, she is adopting a new view about the importance of considering the ideas, preferences, and emotions of young children as an essential part of guiding them. This is the internalization of a different, less authoritarian philosophy about children.

> Yeah, in my country, parents, . . . woman, they stay home, and only men can go out. They can work, and woman she need to do housework and take care of children. And in this country, I saw every family, and when I come here and when we meet with children and parents' time, we talking, we discuss about things. **I'm really happy about this, and how to teach. In my country, children they teach different** way. . . . In my country sometimes they, it's very different. **Here is always polite, yeah, parents, they polite to children. And children polite to the parents. But in my country, children they never talk.** For example, if children they want something, if a parent say, "No. You don't. . . . I don't want it." And children they never say again, "I want that.". . . **And in my country, just if parents say something, you have to do. Yeah, no matter what. I think it's best here. Yeah, I need to understand my children's mind. Sometimes they are upset. They are sad. I need to understand them. But in my country they never . . . they try, but not like this way.**
>
> Sometimes you want to (give) some gift for children and you can ask, "What kind of gift you want? What do you like?" **But in my country,** some families they ask and they discuss with, **but usually . . . just they bought it and they give to children.**

> **. . . but in this country, it's very different. They always ask children,** you know? . . . yeah, **ask what they think.**

Sarita also applies this new understanding of children and their developmental needs to the realm of discipline and teaching. Through the Even Start program, Sarita seems to have learned that while she needs to be consistent in setting limits for her son, she also needs to take his feelings into account when enforcing the limits. Thus, she no longer seems satisfied merely asserting power to make her son do his homework. While she now orients and is highly attuned to the internal psychological motivations for her son's behavior, she also focuses on the way her son thinks about their relationship. In the excerpt below, Sarita states she believes her son is happy knowing she understands his feelings. This ability to take a third-person perspective on her relationship with her son links to the perspective-taking abilities of parents bound by the Socializing way of knowing. Here, Sarita depicts the changes in her view of teaching and guiding.

> Maybe my son, he's tired, and I said, "Do your homework." And he said, "No. I can't do now." And if I force him, it's going to be, you know, I'm upset and he upset. He will never do it. Because he feel tired and he feel . . . if I said nicely to my son, "Rashid, did you do your homework?" And if he said, "Mommy, I'm tired," and I understand that yes, maybe he's tired. "Okay, you can do after five minutes, you can have just now your free time whatever you want to play or something." **It makes happy for him. He understand, mommy is understand my feelings.** If I say, "No, you have to do that right now," maybe he said, "No, no.". . . Sometimes I have to [be] strong. Not always my son's, what he wants. I don't have to do everything he wants. And sometimes, I have to strict with him, **but I need to understand his feelings and how he is, what's going on.**
>
> Yes, if I tell him you have to do this and he, . . . if he said "No, I don't know it," and then if I say, "No, you have to" . . . but maybe he will feel . . . he don't feel good, but I say, I force him, you know? That's maybe doesn't help. If I said, "Okay, take your time you can do it later, not here." And he will feel like this is good.

The Even Start approach seems to have transformed Sarita's understanding of disciplining, nurturing, and teaching her son. She generalizes the Even Start child-focused approach that encourages parents to check their children's wishes across several different parenting responsibilities. She reports she is thinking differently about the realms of teaching and guiding than she previously did. For these reasons, we believe Sarita has substituted the Even Start values and no longer subscribes to the norms of her home culture. However, while the particulars of her values have changed, that she is replacing one set of cultural norms for another is consistent with the developmental literature (Kegan, 1994). Sarita follows what we have previously depicted as the "conservative impulse" of absorbing information in a way that is consistent with and preserves one's way of knowing (Kegan, 1994; Marris, 1974; Piaget, 1952). In Sarita's case, she has incorporated a new "truth" about child-rearing based on the teachings of expert authorities at Even Start (Belenky, et al., 1986). In this sense, she does seem to fit the expectations of the Even Start program (Street, 1997). Nevertheless, Sarita states over and over that she prefers these parenting ideals.

Growing Toward and Reaching Self-Authorship

"Reading the world"—Consolidating and elaborating one's own parenting philosophy and integrated bicultural critical consciousness

Learners growing toward Self-Authorship respond to the Even Start parenting curriculum somewhat differently in subtle and highly nuanced ways. While these more Self-Authoring parents might adopt the program's school-based practices or information about approaches to parental discipline, they use this information to either validate or consolidate their *own emergent theories* or to expand *their self-created* philosophy of parenting. They *do not* seem to *substitute* the Even Start approach for one they held previously, as we surmise Sarita does.

Earlier in this chapter we introduced Linn, an Asian ABE student who is the mother of several young children. She is at a different place along the developmental continuum than her peers who are bound by the Socializing way of knowing. While she shares many features of this developmental position, she is also edging toward Self-Authorship. We find that Linn takes in and makes use of the Even Start information in ways typical of parents growing towards Self-Authorship. Linn incorporates knowledge of children's development, the value of reading, and the Even Start model of child-focused education to consolidate and amplify her own distinct and emergent theory of parenting.

Listening closely to Linn's words and concerns about parenting, guiding, and the value of education for her children, we discern a shift away from her home country's definition of success and philosophy of education.

> Our country emphasize on education is a more competitive. It's so, so strong. Most of parent push their children to study, study, study because they have to pass the test to go to the more high level school. . . . Most of the people want to go to college. I think 90 percent people go to the college, want to go. But it is limited, they have only limited school, so the competitive is very strong. After graduated when they go to the company, they have a lot better on the high level school, so most of people want to go to high level school. . . . I say in last interview, when I live in my country, my parent is the same thing, pushing me to study more and more. **At that time I followed my parents' value. But in my mind, I don't like that. When I move here to U.S.A., the education system is more comfortable the student. They are respect students, student's way, student's mind, they respect student's individually.** And also I think in the U.S.A. to go to the higher level school is not only way to success their life. **So I am happy with this.**

Here, Linn expresses her understanding that there may be multiple definitions of success and multiple attitudes toward education. To us, this insight reflects not merely a shift in values but her shift away from Socializing knowers' tendency to believe in and be defined by one truth or one right way. Linn's developing Self-Authoring capacities enable her to take this critical stance on both her parents' and her culture's mode of pushing children to succeed and compete educationally. Linn's distinct developmental capacities enable her to reflect on her former orientation to conform. She can now step back and show perspective on the ways she previously subordinated her own beliefs to adhere to her parents' expectations and societal values. Linn is no longer wholly defined or directed by these expectations, and her reflection upon her former accepting stance further suggests she is defining and consolidating a self-created view of education and success. This is a subtly different orientation than that expressed by parents who are Socializing knowers. While some of those adults *are* standing against (or in alignment with) their culture's or family's values, their stance is more a *product of reaction* to that which defined them rather than a more distanced Self-Authored belief.

Moreover, Linn seems to be saying that her move to the U.S. and exposure to a different educational approach through participation in the Even Start program have validated and allowed her to give voice to privately held beliefs. Her own ideas about education focus on self-determination, and she believes the U.S. education system supports this belief because it is more respectful of the student's mind and individuality. The values she prizes implicitly promote self-direction.

Here, Linn articulates her values and standards for success, which involve enjoyment of life. These values affect her perspective on guiding and teaching her children and, we believe, undergird her friendly attitude toward Even Start's experiential, child-centered, noncompetitive approach to education.

> Me and my husband think if many people say that you have success, but my fear is that I'm not happy. I think it's not success. . . . Even though many people say that you need success, he feel happy and enjoy his life. This is success. . . . **where I lived in my country everyone think [different]** . . . and everybody want to be success, so **they have many compete in school. Everybody want to be a good professional, get a good job, want to go to best school,** and when I move here, . . . American people I think doesn't care of the kind of life. **American people want to enjoy their life. . . . Yeah, we [she and her husband] think the same way for the children. I thought in my country it's not good. That the parenting in my country, I don't like it there. So after move here I'm content to meet this American education system. . . .** Also I know some people in the U.S.A., their parents want to maybe, for example, high-level people want to[be] sure their children go to high-level living, but most of American people, they emphasize their content with their life, enjoy their whole life.

Once again, Linn seems to be standing against the values of her home country. She links success (for herself and her children) to personal happiness rather than in approbation derived from fulfilling societally sanctioned professional roles or high social status, as we recall was important for Trudie. She explicitly criticizes the ways parents in her home country promote this value, force their children to compete, and pressure their children to perform and conform academically. Linn prefers "going the child's way." Here, she describes her belief that parents need to respect their children's opinions.

> [*And you say parenting is different here because "they go the child's way" . . . can you say what you mean by that?*] For example, the parent want to, their children is going to be a doctor, but their children doesn't like that, **the parent need to, um, respect their opinion.** Then their children make enjoy their life and also . . . they and happy with their life.

In this excerpt, we note that Linn brings a kind of psychological distance to her role as parent. She seems to be saying that parents need to see their children as separate from themselves and that they should refrain from forcing their children into living out their own hoped-for professional trajectories. Thus, Linn implies that a parent's role in guiding her children is to encourage them to find their own choices and life paths. From a developmental perspective, such an insight requires an adult's awareness that a child's successes (or lack thereof) are distinct from and not determinative of one's own. This is an understanding we equate with Self-Authorship. This capacity to take the child's perspective into account, to have empathy for yet not define or relate to one's child solely through one's own needs, is highly compatible with the Even Start parenting curriculum on discipline and teaching.

As is fairly typical of parents growing toward Self-Authorship, Linn incorporates the developmental information she learns at Even Start not as a set of facts or rules to make her children behave but as a means to expand her own understanding of children's motivation and behavior. This helps Linn enact her value of "going the child's way." Still transitioning toward a more fully self-directing way of knowing, Linn seems to rely on expert information about children's developmental capacities and needs. Yet with this knowledge, she is able to stand back and embark on a self-generated critique and assessment of the expectations she holds for her children. Thus, we surmise that Linn uses this expert information to hone and elaborate on an emerging philosophy about the nature of the child and parental responsibility. This seems reflective of the way learners moving toward Self-Authorship will differently take in and use a set of widely held ideas or "parenting know-how" (such as those taught in the Even Start program) to *intentionally* strengthen their own perspectives and parenting competence.

> If I can understand my children's development stage . . . **sometimes I expect my children higher level stage.** But after I know the children's development things, I can understand my children's mistakes and their misbehavior. I can understand.

For many parents, the Even Start parenting curriculum's focus on reading with one's child is a new and important idea that may not be stressed in their cultures. Like the parents bound by the Socializing way of knowing, Linn articulates the ways she has come to believe in the importance of reading. However, unlike her peers operating from this developmental position, Linn relies on her experience of self-change through reading as evidence of its transformative capacity. She does not merely internalize her teachers' exhortations to read with one's children as the basis for her own beliefs. Yet, Linn also seems to be suggesting that what she reads (what knowledgeable authors of a text assert) has tremendous power for her and can change her. Thus, we might say she still is prone to internalize "expert" information as an important source of truth and guidance for her self-definition. Such tendency to rely on one's own subjective experience as a source of truth *and to simultaneously* rely on expert knowledge is in keeping with individuals beginning their transition into a more Self-Authoring way of knowing. Here as also revealed in the other interview excerpts, the Even Start program seems to be syntonic with, validating, and elaborating of Linn's developing views on teaching, learning, and guiding.

> After I joining this program, I emphasized the reading for children. Of course, I think reading is a very important thing, but I didn't have many information about the reading. But this program, **every time when I read something, I'm changed.** I got some information from the reading. So I think reading is a very important for the children too. So I want to try to read to my children. . . . **I know I'm changing because some reading. So I want to show to my children reading can change**

> **your life**. Most of time, I talk to my children. Reading is very important for your life. I say it a lot.

In contrast to Socializing parents or those, like Linn, who are in transition from this way of knowing, parents who have reached Self-Authorship, like Dalia, rely on themselves and their own judgment as the primary source of knowledge. As Dalia emphatically states, "I am my own role model, and I try to be role models for my children." Like Linn, Dalia uses information she gains through the Even Start program to improve her competence as a parent. However, unlike Linn, Dalia makes her own assessment of what's appropriate both for her daughter and herself. She does not look to expert knowledge to inform or guide her expectations for her daughter. Rather, Dalia independently critiques her tendency to limit her daughter's activities. This self-critique emanates from Dalia's capacity to step back from her relationship with her daughter, observe her own actions, and evaluate her parenting behavior according to a larger set of Self-Authored expectations and beliefs she holds as a parent: in this case, that an important part of guiding is to allow a child to learn and develop independence. Thus, Dalia reflects on and assesses her own fearful response and finds it wanting and inhibiting of her daughter's autonomy. She subordinates her worry to her self-generated superordinate value of promoting her daughter's sense of mastery.

> And then she [her daughter] learned how to use scissors, which I was very scared at home to let her use them. And which she knew how but not as good as she is now because she comes in and she uses it every morning, and she cut papers and she goes and she make nice pattern, and I know it was because more so that she comes here [to Even Start], she is doing it. **Because at home I was doing the stuff more. She was more doing the watching me doing it** and learn from that, or I would be doing it with her. **And that didn't really give her her independence. I know I did the same thing when my son was little. I didn't want to let him do stuff.** Then they taught him stuff in the nursery school. I couldn't believe what he was ready for.

Dalia also exemplifies the distinctive way Self-Authoring parents translated and bound the knowledge they gain in the Even Start program. As we described earlier, Socializing knowers tend to take in information in a more wholesale or "cookbook" way. They frequently teach their children as they were taught, presenting information or activities in the form or model used in their Even Start program. Dalia appears to share information differently. In the excerpt below, Dalia describes the confluence between what she is learning in the Even Start program and what her children are learning in their schools. Dalia seems delighted and amazed by such a coincidence but she keeps this to herself and out of discussions with her children. She understands and anticipates her children's reactions to her teaching them what she has learned in school. She regulates and tempers what she tells her children about her own classroom instruction. She is aware and mindful of how her children learn, what they will hear, and what they tolerate. Thus, she's very deliberate about the way she teaches her children, bounding the information she shares to ensure her children keep learning. Simultaneously, Dalia observes herself, noting how her own education coincides or runs parallel to that of her children. She understands her own learning strengthens her sense of self-authority and parental competence.

This insight, in turn, reinforces her desire to keep learning and "refresh her mind."[11] This capacity to take a perspective on setting limits (both for oneself and one's children) is consistent with Self-Authoring parents' approach to guiding.

> [*So what do your kids think of your being in this program?*] Me being here, with the thing about it, "Mommy goes to school." And then they get to hear what I learn every day. So I, it's just coincidence all the time. It's like things I learn in school, and then I go home, I get to use those things I learned in school with my kids. Sometime it's just coincidence, incidents that happens to them and, or they are asking me a question, and it has to do with whatever I learned in school. Always. I mean, I was like, "Wow, where was I before, or what was happening before?" It's just so, sometime it was like, "Whoa." Because I know. **I know what's happening. But they don't know.** But when they ask me a question, my eyes go, they are like, "Mommy, what's the matter?" **But I don't want to tell them, this is what I learned in school. Then they don't want to hear it. So I have to just explain it to them.** Like they would ask me questions like from the dictionary and something I had to look in the dictionary when I was in school today. And then I can answer it to them. **It just tells me more why I should refresh my mind and come here all the time,** even I can't get as much as I could a little bit at a time. Yes, it happens to me all the time. . . . I can remember my son coming home. First thing he says to me, "Mommy this and that." And I'm like, I did this earlier.

Like Linn, Dalia has her own definition of success and her own notion of what it means to "become somebody." Indeed, Dalia seems to be voicing the same values Linn stresses as important for children: "going the child's way" and respecting children's opinions. Like Linn, Dalia views guiding her children as encouraging them to make their own career choices and find their own life paths. She neither expects or requires her children to fulfill her blueprint for their career choices nor hopes they will strive to fit social expectations. This is a different notion of identity development than parents either growing from Instrumentalism or bound by a Socializing way of knowing expressed. For example, Trudie seemed to equate "becoming somebody" with both attaining material rewards and acquiring approval or status through socially valued occupational roles. In contrast, Dalia is concerned about developing competence. She wants her children to do something (e.g., a career) really well, regardless of what that might be. Dalia links "becoming someone" to becoming masterful, and it is mastery that is equated with success. Dalia's conception of identity development and what it means to support one's children orients to encouraging their self-determination. In our view, Dalia's drive toward mastery and competence and her insistence that, regardless of their occupational choice, her children be engaged and expert is emblematic of Self-Authoring individuals' focus on maximizing their potential, upholding their standards, and expanding and deepening their competence.

> Well, sometimes he [her older son] says, "Oh, I want to be a police officer." You know, sometimes he says, "I want to be a fireman." All those dreams that he has of completing a degree, you know, being a detective or being an inspector, **whatever**

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[11] This developmental interpretation is largely drawn from the process sheets of N. Popp's structural analysis of Dalia's interview text. In several cases, we have used Popp's exact wording, since we were hard pressed to improve the analysis ourselves.

> **he wants to be,** you know. **I want those things to come true for him. So to me, that's being somebody. And even if he's just doing something that's not professional, you know, whatever that might be, I want him to be able to do it in a fashionly way** that it's done, not somebody's going to be doing something today and doing something tomorrow . . . Do something for a long time. Not just, "today I want to and tomorrow I don't want to." You know, and **be very professional in whatever he chooses to do. Being successful at it . . . because no matter what you do, you can know it so well.** You can write a book about it, you know? **You can be successful even being a housewife, even raising kids. You can be successful about everything.**

Most of the learners we interviewed expressed a strong desire to guide their children. Yet as we have consistently argued, their concept of guiding was shaped, in part, by their developmental position. For example, parents bound by the Socializing way of knowing appeared to focus on helping their children be good people, empathic and aware of others' feelings. We wonder whether the ability to conceive of guiding as shepherding a child's identity instead of shaping or modifying a child's behaviors requires a minimum of a Socializing way of knowing. We imagine this is so because identity appears connected to the abstract concept that people's individual (idiosyncratic) and discrete behaviors, emotions, thoughts, and interactions all cohere into something greater than simply concrete action-oriented tendencies. Rather, they represent one's ideals, values, and internal psychological perspectives toward oneself and the world. Such a requirement for abstract thought in tandem with the capacity to generalize specific behaviors into the concept of personality necessitates that a person operate from the Socializing way of knowing.

Almost all the learners growing from Socializing ways of knowing into Self-Authorship seem to be increasingly reflective about the complexity of setting the terms of their own and their children's identity. Recall Linn's narrative,

> [*And you said you teach your children about your culture?*] **This is very difficult question.** Yeah sometimes I worry about that situation. I so, so many Asian children have, like that kind of problem. **They lost their identity in the U.S.A., so they have many problems in this country.** But me and my husband believe if they have a strong identity, I'm an Asian and I'm and American-Asian, I'm American. **If they have a strong identity, they can [have] American culture and Asian culture. . . . But if they don't have much [of both cultures], . . . they don't know who they are, they not Asian, they not American.** . . . So because of that, me and my husband also want to teach our culture and our language. But in that situation, he [her son] can success for his life.

Like Linn, immigrant parents growing toward or reaching Self-Authorship appear to have a qualitatively different understanding of their own and their children's acculturation processes as well as a different stance toward their parental role responsibilities of guiding. They see themselves as cultural translators and mediators and actively construct an integrated bicultural identity for their children. This active reflection upon and synthesis of their home country's culture with U.S. cultural norms and values is distinct from parents either growing from Instrumentalism or bound by Socializing ways of knowing.

As described earlier, across our interviews, the students bound by the Socializing way of knowing seemed to prefer and accept the Even Start approach to learning and parenting. While it is true that for the majority of these parents the Even Start parenting curriculum was syntonic with their own views, a critique of Even Start or U.S. parenting practices and values was notably absent in these students' narratives. It may be that (in part) these students' greater acceptance of U.S. cultural practices reflects the way that Socializing parents may identify with the operating cultural norms and values. In contrast, more Self-Authoring parents *do not* readily, unquestioningly internalize the norms or parenting approaches of their adopted country. Rather, they carefully assess and retain those aspects of each culture they believe their children should know.

Hamid, an ABE learner from the sub-Sahara, and a parent of many children, provides a good example of this active critical stance. He expresses a strong belief that his children and others from his home country should embrace their bicultural identity. In other words, he greatly respects and appreciates the cultural literacy to which he is exposed, but he will select and assess the cultural components he will teach his children.

> the best thing for me, I studied . . . we have the African and American kids here. So I feel in the future, **I want to teach two cultures,** what it is exactly . . . even if not teach, I love it, to have the community teach African-American kids what exactly is culture. . . . We have a wonderful culture in Africa, what is different from American . . . the American and African culture . . . **the kids have to know their own custom, culture, own history [and] they have to know they are American, they have to know the American culture,** what it is, what America is, that is my hope.

Hamid understands his role responsibilities as a parent as preserving his children's knowledge of his home country's culture while supporting them in their identity as Americans. He seems to stress a complex insight that in merely adapting or adopting the values of another culture as one's own, one can risk subordinating one's beliefs, heritage, and ultimately one's dignity.

> Important for me, my family have to, my kids get enough education and be successful. . . . Yes, and [get an] education, and how they live in America, in the system. . . . **That means how the kid, how they live with**, you know, **other culture**. . . . And what is exactly [for them] different and typical, and they are, so what exactly for them and typical, when they are African, how [they are] different and what [they do], and how they get [help] them and how they get help from Americans and so in America [because their own country is different]. . . . Some people, **they think only American if you get good education and they get enough [things]. . . . That's fine. That's the only thing, but not to me.** I like the, you know that's a little good that they, you know, the more things they know in America because they are American, that's a [good thing] but, **you know, I don't like it if they lose their own culture, their own history . . . They lose their own dignity and maybe they live under somebody's culture. That's not my [way].** [*You are saying, tell me if I understand you, you want your kids to learn a lot about America. That's good, but you want them to hold on to their own culture.?*] That's right. [*And you said, because if they don't, maybe they lose their own dignity?*] That's

> right. [*And sort of who they are? How do you come to this? Not everybody believes this.*] **Because, if you lose yours, you have to run in somebody's system. That's not a right thing.**

Hamid's excerpt reveals a distinct relationship to power and authority. Unlike those parent-learners bound by the Socializing way of knowing, Hamid does not believe a person should necessarily abide by any authority or institutional prescription. Rather, Hamid proclaims his right to claim and the need to maintain the traditions and history he equates with his cultural identity and dignity. Hamid's statement is reminiscent of Weinstein-Shr's (1995, p. 12) observation that immigrant learners face particular challenges to and potential losses of "intergenerational relationships and transmission of cultural knowledge." Yet Hamid actively works against such losses and asserts the salience and value of passing on the wisdom, experience, and traditions of his culture as key to developing his children's identity. Only when learners are moving toward Self-Authorship do we begin to hear such a perspective in their interviews.

Ahara, an ESOL learner also from the sub-Sahara, similarly chooses to preserve some aspects of her home country culture in her children's lives, while supporting them in adopting some American values. She occasionally teaches her eight year old daughter how to wash dishes and cook, behaviors traditionally taught to girls in Ahara's home culture. Ahara describes difference in gender roles and adult-child responsibilities and expectations between her home country and the U.S. and how she reconciles them. Striking in Ahara's dialogue is her active sythesis of values from both her home country and the U.S. Moreover, Ahara seems to apply her knowledge of children's development (we presume she's gained through the Even Start program) to the gender-role expectations for children in her culture. Thus, wishing her daughter maintain some of the traditions with which she grew up, Ahara recalibrates the cultural expectations that girls do housework so they are developmentally appropriate for her daughter. In so doing, she demonstrates her capacity to stand outside the cultural expectations and norms of both countries and to reflect upon and evaluate them. Ahara selects elements from each country's parenting practices she deems important and integrates them into her own philosophy of how she wishes to raise her daughter in the United States. These capacities—especially her distance from the cultural norms and practices—and her abilities to synthesize and reconfigure her philosophy according to self-generated values, link to the Self-Authoring features of her developmental position.

> Because in this country and my country different culture, everything different. You don't have it in this country, the family they not live around you, just the children. In the back home child helping you, your husband, he didn't have kids [to] help . . . **They [the kids] clean at home a lot, just do what you want, do that in the back home. . . . But in this country the children, doesn't do anything.** . . . Now my daughter eight years old. **My country, eight years old they cook, they help clean up the house they was the dish. . . . Everything strict in my country** . . . But this country, they don't do . . . . Just I showing [her daughter] I teach her, you have to clean up, you have to take care . . . Because she born in this country, but I teach her how to do, how to help . . . **I don't want her to cook in the kitchen . . . because she too young . . . but I teaching her to wash a dish . . . just small, small thing, to pick up the toys.**

Like Hamid, Ahara wants her children to retain and have an awareness of the ways that children in her home country are reared. To facilitate this cultural awareness, Ahara takes her children to her home country to learn firsthand how children are raised there and how she was raised at their age. This is a proactive step in educating her children about their cultural heritage.

> Important to me about my children. They grow up this country. . . . Yeah, I'm think important to me, how to take care of them . . . to do safe things . . . how to teach them good way, grow up this country. **Because this country, they have too many different cultures, too many drug, violence, many things.** So it's important [to me] to [keep] my children safe. To teach to behave [s] good kids. . . . **Just because these children they born this country, they grow up this country, just they know about this country. I feel my family need to know about back home, my family, how I grow up when I was the same age as them,** and I visit with my children to my country, how look like the country, how my family, how I grow up in this country [in her own home country]. And they [her children] like this country.

Like other individuals moving toward Self-Authorship, Ahara is critical of U.S. norms and neither totally accepts nor adopts the American way of life. Rather, she seems to suggest she has a set of core values she wants to impart to her children and evaluates those elements of each culture she feels are syntonic with her self-determined beliefs and morals. She defines this fashioning of her children's values as a critical part of her parenting role responsibilities. She neither cedes this responsibility to others nor believes others automatically share her beliefs or ideology. Here, Ahara describes some of the values she feels are important for her children to learn.

> And . . . they need to know . . . how they behave and what is [good] people, good children, how they behave. They need have good education, good things. Not good behavior . . . they learn bad things, and just drink, drug, and . . . violence, just for looking something . . . the bad things. **And I teach them what important to me** . . . I just spend my time with them to teach my children to value . . . You have to teach them many time, not one time. Because children they need to know what they do, their parents they give their children love . . . and uh I give them good education to how to grow up . . . every time, I'm trying! . . . and I trying teach them just to value . . . and **not all the people teach the children good, some . . . not like that, that's my opinion, I try everyday to teach what I grow up,** what I do and what they learn, [so] they going to be smart. . . . **Just, I don't just listen to outside rules. I have my own rules . . . Just because I have to, I saw this country many things and I have my own and I compare.**

Hamid, Ahara, and to a slightly lesser degree, Linn, consider both cultures' philosophical strengths and weaknesses, discerning which aspects of each they wish to incorporate in their children's development. They do not see their teachers, texts, or institutions as the explicit cultural instructors for them and their children and do not expect their teachers or the Even Start program to inform them how they should adopt or enact particular cultural practices. In other words, while these students greatly respect and appreciate the cultural literacy to which they are exposed, they see themselves as the architects of their children's cultural identity. This capacity to engage, reflect upon, and critique both cultures reflects their own developmental complexity. Once again, in this way, these more Self-

Authoring students are distinct from their peers in that they base parenting decisions on superordinate internally generated values about what is best for their children. They make these decisions knowing that individuals construct culture and they can choose from multiple cultural "truths."

Summary of Forms of Internalization of Parenting Curriculum

Across their interviews, the ABE and ESOL learners in our study frequently and spontaneously expressed their own distinctive views of guiding and teaching their children. To a large extent, their current perspectives seem informed by their cultural background, families' teaching, and own experiences of discipline and learning. Yet our reading of these parents' interviews also reveals that the learners' developmental position importantly shapes their conceptions of guiding, understanding of their children's development, and ways they respond to, take in, and use the teachings of the Even Start parenting curriculum. In other words, these parents' developmental positions influence the ways they internalize information gleaned through the Even Start program and the cultural-social surround.

Fitting in and Following the Rules of the Cultural Context—Growing From Instrumentalism

As we've noted, parents growing from Instrumentalism are simultaneously bound to a more concrete interpretation of information and desire to internalize the values of the social surround (i.e., the values of their home country, their adopted country, or literacy program). Their internalizations demonstrate features of both Instrumental and the Socializing ways of knowing. For example, in the realm of discipline, as we saw with Yvette, these parents use and take in concrete parenting strategies and rules that produce the child behavior they wish to promote. This interpretive approach reflects the more Instrumental side of the incorporation process. These parents may also employ strategies in ways that help them check in with their children's motives and tune in to their moods. This is a move toward the Socializing knower's orientation to putting oneself in the shoes of the other and internalizing someone else's response as implicating one's own.

We observed that a few Instrumentalist parents were able to hold conflicting beliefs about discipline simultaneously. It may be that the concrete and rule-bound elements of the Instrumental way of knowing enable an individual growing away from this developmental position to keep conflicting or differing values on separate bands of experience. Moreover, the concrete compartmentalizing features of this frame of knowing may allow a person to enact one set of value-driven behaviors in one context and another in a different context. As we described earlier, Trudie was quite comfortable simultaneously holding two very distinct approaches to discipline and punishment, those of her home country and those of the Even Start program. Earlier, we suggested that Trudie might see herself following the Even Start discipline approach in the U.S. while she might use physical punishment in her home country. We also surmised that one's personal history of discipline and learning might incline an individual moving from Instrumentalism to adopting one set of cultural practices and values over another. This was the case with Yvette who, although from the same Caribbean country as Trudie, sought to incorporate the Even Start philosophy approach to limit-setting rather than maintain the discipline approach of her home country.

Fitting in, Aligning with, and Internalizing Cultural Values—Socializing Ways of Knowing

We also suggested that individuals bound by the Socializing way of knowing are most likely to internalize the norms of their psychosocial surround. This seems to represent an individual's tendency to align with or move against the values and norms of their home country. As we suggested previously, this observation is similar to Gadsden's (1996, p. 2) statement that individuals construct their futures "within or oppositional to the life-course trajectory of their families." We wish to point out, however, that at heart, whether building upon their family's values or moving toward those of their host culture or literacy program, parent-learners bound by the Socializing way of knowing are still responding to the set of values or norms to which they were originally exposed.

We found that many of the study participants moving toward internalizing the Even Start approach to discipline and learning were, in fact, consolidating and elaborating the views and values of their families of origin, particularly their mothers. Others were consolidating emergent values and approaches established in opposition to their personal experience. Whether the values aligned with or were distinct from those of their home country, the Even Start program validated these learners' self-described ascendant or developing perspectives on teaching and guiding their children.

We did not hear in the narratives of these Socializing learners any struggle to maintain preferred home culture values that were in opposition to the values propounded by the Even Start program. In the sample of learners we interviewed, these conflicts never came up. We hypothesize that the either/or nature of the Socializing way of knowing, in which knowledge or values are understood as right or wrong and true or untrue, would make such a conflict very difficult for these learners to resolve. We also surmise that, faced with choosing between conflicting preferred family or home country values and values promoted by a literacy program and/or host culture, these learners *might* substitute the values of their current social context. Because it is difficult for learners in this developmental position to hold competing views or "truths" simultaneously, and thus they feel they must choose (Belenky et al., 1986). We support this conjecture with the theoretical insight (Kegan, 1982, 1994) that individuals bound by the Socializing way of knowing define themselves through the values and expectations of others. Kegan (1982, p. 96) writes how choosing between competing values or expectations can pose difficulties for Socializing knowers. For these individuals, such conflicts are problematic because

> . . . ambivalence or . . . conflicts are not really conflicts between what I want and what someone else wants [as they are for Instrumentalist knowers] . . . they turn out to be conflicts between what I want to do **as part of this shared reality** and what I want to do **as part of that shared reality.** To ask someone [in this way of knowing] to resolve such a conflict by bringing both shared realities before herself is to name precisely the limits of this way of [knowing].

As Kegan goes on to explain, "bringing before oneself" would entail an ability to take a perspective on and be separate from these multiple values and expectations—the shared reality—that defines and determines the Socializing knower's sense of self and ideals. This distance, perspective-taking, and critique is beyond the reach of these knowers. Feminist researchers Belenky, et al. (1986, pp. 48–49) make the same interpretation. Describing the women in their study who were also bound by this way of knowing, they write,

> one can see the self only as mirrored in the eyes of others, the urgency is great to live up to others' expectations, in the hope of preventing others from forming a dim view. Thus, [these] women . . . listen carefully and try hard to live up to the images that others have held up for them. They are especially at the mercy of authorities' judgements.

For these Socializing knowers, difference and distinction may be experienced as threatening to oneself and may incline them to strive to *fit in* much in the manner Street (1997) and other critical theorists (Auerbach, 1997; Taylor, 1997) suggest. We also conjecture that, as feminist constructive-developmental researchers, Belenky, et al. (1986) posit, if two different important authorities present these parents with contradictory views or philosophies of equal value they will tend to go with what most people believe or with the ideals of the authority who wields the most status. This is our interpretation of Sarita's response of substituting the Even Start approach to discipline, education, and view of the nature of the child for the thinking and philosophy of her home culture.

Even having said this, we reiterate and maintain our assertion that this wholesale substitution is most like critical theorists' observations of the ways learners may abandon their own cultural practices. As our data suggests and we have repeatedly argued, for some of these Socializing learners, the internalization of literacy program or host culture values may be about developing, consolidating, or elaborating emergent or existing views that may be syntonic with their own family of origin's philosophy. Thus, we stress the need to add dimension to the concept of "fitting in" and urge restraint in automatically equating internalization with the abandonment of one's culture. When assessing a person's internalization of programmatic or new cultural norms, it may be helpful to ask how she or he may be "fitting in" to a particular set of values that relate to a particular personal history, previous experience, and prior set of family or cultural approaches. Nevertheless, the Socializing knower's tendency to readily internalize values of the psychosocial-educational context, combined with their reliance on expert authority, points to the need for educators to be especially mindful and reflective about the ways the norms and ideals they teach will be adopted and enacted by these learners. As our own research suggests, teachers may powerfully influence Socializing learners' attitudes toward themselves and their children.

"Reading the World"—Growing Toward and Reaching Self-Authorship

Finally, we hypothesize that not until the advent of Self-Authorship—that is to say, not until features of the Self-Authoring way of knowing significantly contour the interpretative meaning frame of an individual—can someone engage in or demonstrate a consciously active, independent critique of cultural norms and values. This was the case for the learners in our study. While some participants who were either moving toward or had reached the Socializing way of knowing did, in fact, reject family or cultural beliefs, we interpret these rejections as responses to personally uncomfortable experiences with family and/or cultural practices. In contrast, the critiques mounted by learners moving toward or already operating from Self-Authoring ways of knowing had a different tenor. They evidenced an intellectual and emotional distance. These critiques entailed a tendency to compare and at times contrast differing and conflicting cultural values. No longer defining themselves solely through the expectations of psychosocial surround, these more Self-Authoring adults were able to step back, assess, and evaluate a proposed philosophy of discipline, a view of children's development, or an educational approach in relation to their self-created ideology or personal vision of parenting. Kegan (1994, p. 90) writes about these "bigger visions" that Self-Authoring adults who are parents may create.

> These bigger "visions" are not just values. They are "values *about* values." They are systems by which we can choose among our values when they conflict. . . . The ability thus to subordinate, regulate and indeed create (rather than be created by) our values and ideals, the ability to [take a perspective] on our values and ideals rather than [be made up or run by them] must necessarily be an expression of a [Self-

> Authoring] way of knowing . . . the mental making of an ideology or explicit system of belief.

As we previously mentioned, the more Self-Authoring parents sought to attain cultural literacy and knowledge of the workings of American institutions. In our view, this desire to learn about the American system links to their general understanding that knowledge represents and reflects thought systems. Implicit in such an awareness is that different systems of thought coexist and knowledge itself is a construction and contextual. Thus, these learners realize the same set of ideas may be interpreted differently, depending on the framework, preferences, or bias of, for example, an individual, a teacher, or a social system. In other words, learners who were moving toward or had reached Self-Authorship exhibited the developmental capacity to critically interpret knowledge and reflect on their own or the host country's cultural values or norms. They were able to use the Even Start parenting and ABE/ESOL curriculum to "read the world" —a capacity that critical theorists such as Freire and Macedo (1987) depict as crucial in literacy learning.

The learners in our study who were growing toward or had reached Self-Authorship were actively engaged as constructors of their children's identities. These parents were able to stand back, evaluate, and "read" (or interpret) the two cultures' norms according to their self-created ideologies, their bigger visions. These Self-Authoring parents selected and integrated the elements, beliefs, values, and practices they deemed important to their own and their children's bicultural identities. Theirs was a process of active reconfiguration and reconstruction of the ideological terms set before them. This is a considerably different stance than that of the Socializing parents, who tended to take at face value the models offered by the program or psychosocial surround, accepting or rejecting them in a rather either/or manner.

Critical literacy theorist Bernardo Ferdman (1990) writes about the relationship between English literacy learning, acculturation, and identity. Ferdman suggests that there may be a bidirectional relationship between cultural identity and literacy education in which each influences and mediates the other. Considering the complex interaction of a learner's cultural identity and the values and ideas a literacy program teaches, he asks, "How do the particular pedagogical approach, the texts that are used and the purpose of literacy as communicated by the school relate to the learner's motives and sense of identity? . . . Must the learner change the nature of his or her self-concept in order to do what is asked [by the curriculum]?" (1990, p. 198). Based on the analysis of the Even Start students' response to the parenting education curriculum, we believe learners are actively and differently engaged with the curriculum and will differently experience curriculum requirements. As we have consistently argued, developmental position (i.e., one's way of knowing) powerfully predicts how these learners relate to the program's implicit values, educational practices, learning expectations, and beliefs about parenting and knowledge—all elements that many literacy researchers (Lytle, 1991; Ullman, 1997; McKay & Weinstein-Shr, 1993) concur have bearing on a person's self-concept. Much like Ferdman, we understand changes in the learners' self-concept and culturally linked parenting identity and values as the complex result of multiple mutually influencing forces. However, our data suggests that a learner's personal history, cultural, and/or family of origin's values in combination with her own developmental position influence how she internalizes and incorporates the teachings of the program and the parenting norms of the host culture.

Generally speaking, the Even Start parents seem to assimilate information and adopt aspects of the parenting curriculum into their construction of their role as parent consistent with their developmental position—they follow the "conservative impulse" (Marris, 1974, Piaget, 1952). In so doing, they may consolidate or elaborate their particular parenting practices, views, or values within that given way of knowing. Thus, to a large extent, we believe a learner's developmental position filters and bounds the form and breadth of changes in self-concept and parenting identity that occur through Even Start program participation. Faced with many cultural challenges to their social identities, these ABE and ESOL students seem to feel the Even Start program strengthens their self-concept and their identity, authority, and efficacy as parents.

Nevertheless, the Even Start program seems to promote and reward a parenting approach premised on mutuality, empathy, and the ability to take and internalize one's child's perspective as a guide for one's own behaviors and beliefs. Thus, the parenting component of the curriculum may implicitly require and expect a minimum developmental level—that of the Socializing way of knowing. Therefore, the program may foster the more Socializing aspects of the transition between Instrumental and the Socializing ways of knowing. Additionally, from the reports of several students within the ESOL and ABE classes (and from our discussions with the teachers), we discern that the overall ABE/ESOL curriculum intentionally embraces multicultural perspectives and regularly explores the institutional workings, expectations, and traditions of different cultures. In this sense, we might surmise that both the ABE and ESOL classroom curricula implicitly reinforce the value and importance of multiple perspectives and multiple truths. We understand this as a challenge to Socializing knowers' tendency to see one truth and one reality. In sum, we surmise that the Even Start program gently invites developmental growth for learners across a variety of developmental positions. Such invitations to growth frequently entail and even promote changes in self-concept. While the program may invite growth, it also offers an array of developmental supports and a great deal of confirmation to parent-learners at different developmental positions. In this next section, we investigate the ways the Even Start program invites and engenders multiple forms of growth for the learners we interviewed in the ABE and ESOL classes. Additionally, we describe the variety of supports the students in our study reported as helpful to their learning.

IV. SUPPORTIVE AND GROWTH-PROMOTING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: "SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CLASSROOM"

Recently, a small number of literacy researchers have undertaken and begun to call for investigations of literacy learners' beliefs (Gambrell & Heathinton, 1981; Johnston, 1985; Lytle, 1991; Mikulecky & Ehlinger, 1986). Susan Lytle (1990, p. 120), whose focus is adults' literacy development, defines literacy learner beliefs as "adults' own evolving conceptual frameworks or theories about language, literacy, teaching and learning." She depicts learner beliefs as an important dimension of literacy development in adulthood. In our study, we wanted to ascertain what the ABE and ESOL learners said they wanted and expected from their teachers. In essence we wished to know these students' conceptions or theories of good teaching, guidance, and support. In reply (and in a way that was similar to students across the two other research sites), the Even Start learners in our study within and across the ABE and ESOL classes repeatedly commented on the important role their teachers played in encouraging and enhancing their learning. Particularly notable was that across the learners' characterizations of supportive teaching, patterns emerged that reflected students' instructional preferences, views of teacher concern, and conceptions of teacher responsibility.

Moreover, specific patterns of teacher expectations and views of support were shared by learners bound by a common developmental position. Thus, the Even Start ABE/ESOL learners in our study articulated teaching theories consistent with prior developmental literature and research on adult learners of other contexts and social, economic, and educational backgrounds (Belenky et al., 1986; Broderick, 1996; Lasker, 1975; Kegan, 1994; Perry, 1970; Weathersby, 1976). This was somewhat surprising, given that the Even Start students we interviewed had considerably diverse educational backgrounds within and across the two classes. For example, two of the students (Elena and Felicia) had university degrees, while a number (Hamid and Ahara) had relatively little schooling. Several students (Jean and Ho) reported previous negative school histories fraught with feelings of failure and replete with a perceived lack of teacher support and interest. Other students, such as Elena and Linn, recounted pressured and competitive past school experiences.

Even though the learners' perceptions of teacher support and responsibility seem to fall along developmental lines, certain preferences overlap across the ways of knowing. This overlap results from at least two factors. First, as we have previously explained, the majority of the students we interviewed at the Even Start site share features of the Socializing way of knowing. Most students were either growing toward, bound by, or moving out of this developmental position. Therefore, it is understandable that they may also share some similar expectations of their teachers. Second, we wonder if the recurring focus on the practical and mechanical aspects of teacher support that permeates the learner's narratives, regardless of developmental position reflects the fact that almost all of these students are immigrants and working hard to master the skills of the English literacy (i.e., reading, writing, speaking). Thus, students repeatedly mention their wish for teacher guidance in these more mechanical aspects of learning. Finally, we hypothesize that, in this instance, much like the learners' construals of the challenges they face, students of different developmental positions articulate a kind of nesting of concerns, expectations, and requirements for teacher help. In other words, students operating from more Self-Authoring ways of knowing may describe some similar expectations to those learners growing from Instrumental and/or Socializing ways of knowing, but they will express other expectations distinctive of their developmental position.

Once again, to help the reader clearly determine how a particular way of knowing may shape the students' understanding of teacher responsibilities and support, we highlight and showcase the differences and simultaneously seek to capture those similarities that seem important to these learners' descriptions.

Students' Understanding of Teacher Support and the Teacher-Student Relationship

Growing Away from Instrumentalism

What the students expect from their teachers and their conceptions of teacher support

The teacher as the source of learning: How the teacher "makes you learn"

For learners growing away from Instrumentalism, the teacher is granted a place of central authority in the learning process and is seen as the source of learning. The teacher provides direct instruction, concrete examples, information, and resources; shows different ways of problem solving; and answers students' questions. Knowledge and information tend to be understood as a kind of product, a series of skills the teacher gives or shares with her students. Thus, the teacher is viewed as a kind of trainer or instructor or, as so many of these students stated, "the teacher makes you learn." Students operating from this developmental position tend to cast learning as a one-way transaction, in which the teacher is responsible for giving students information and facts and making them learn. The students receive the product of knowledge.

The teacher is viewed as the source of support for a student's motivation. One essential way the teacher encourages or motivates the students is in setting classroom structure and holding students to classroom rules. It is notable that for these participants, motivation and confidence are understood as *things* coming from an outside source to the self instead of intrinsic to the self. For example, when asked what makes a good teacher, Trudie states, "The teacher makes sure you come on time, do your homework, you learn." Trudie seems to feel the teacher holds the student to the behavioral and academic requirements and rules of the classroom that, in turn, help her learn. This external structure provides the scaffolding for her motivation.

Yvette says the way her teachers tell her she can "take her time" gives her confidence. Confidence seems less an internal psychological state and more a way of feeling one's agency in being able *to do*. An external permission-giving source, in the form of her teacher's verbal directive, engenders confidence in Yvette.

> **They give you time** to know better. But some questions sometimes that they ask, I don't know, I don't understand. They say, "Take your time, you can [answer] when you take your time, you can do something." They say, "Don't be afraid, don't say you not come again. You can take time . . . not say you can't learn." And **they put it in your head**, you change your mind, you'd like to do something.

Yvette explains how her teachers encourage her to think she can learn. However, the way that she describes this encouragement suggests she views her teachers' directive as a commodity. Her teachers "put it in her head," as if they put the words there that tell her she can learn and stay in the program. Casting confidence in such concrete transactive terms is considerably different from the ways that Socializing students speak of their teachers' support. For those students, the mutuality of the teacher–student relationship provides confidence in itself. Yet in this case, Yvette seems a kind of receiver in which she *is given* the words of confidence which she both "gets" and takes.

This transactional view of learning and understanding of the teacher's role filters through these students' descriptions of how their teachers help them learn and the way they see the teacher as the foremost authority. Trudie is the clearest spokesperson for the sole authority of the teacher: "The teacher is my only resource
. . . the friend can't teach you." Trudie goes on to describe the way her teacher helps her learn:

> [My teacher] . . . has knowledge which good for the other class. Anything we don't understand, she try **to make us understand it.** And when we write something and it's no good, **she help us the right way to write it.**
>
> [My teacher] is always there with the reading, writing activity . . . sometimes she find articles in the newspaper and explains it and **tells you what that means,** you understand better.
>
> [My teacher] **give me reading and making me read with her,** give explain her what I read and if I understand the reading.

Listening to Trudie, one hears the teacher's authority as primary. The teacher is cast as central to the students' learning; she transmits the information and the students take it in. The students, in turn, feed back what they've learned. It is a kind of "I take, you take" listening approach and "You give, I take" learning attitude. This is also reflective of the Instrumentalist's conception of knowledge as skills and specific facts.

Instrumental learners rely on their teachers to tell them what to do and how to do it. They want direct instruction and clear explanations. They expect and appreciate constructive feedback about the "right way" to learn and demonstrate their knowledge. In this way, the teacher demonstrates her authority; she is the knowledge bearer and tells the students what they need to know. Consistent with these learners' notion of truth, students growing from Instrumentalism assume there is one best interpretation or explanation. They want the teacher to give them the meaning of what they're learning or reading. They view such direct instruction as support for their learning.

On the other side of the teacher–student relationship, students growing from Instrumentalism for the most part depict their role and responsibilities in practical behavioral concrete terms. Trudie names the student's obligations this way:

> [A good student must] come on time, do your homework, respect the teacher, you do what she told you to do.

Yvette similarly describes the student's relationship to the teacher and the learning enterprise.

> . . . you do homework, you make up your mind to learn something . . . you have to listen and pay attention, something you don't understand or don't know, you can ask and they can explain you what they mean . . . but you have to listen and you have to be polite.

Students growing from Instrumentalism see the teacher as the monitor of their learning progress; the teacher keeps the students on track, and her evaluations tell them how well they're learning. When asked how she knows when she's learned something, Trudie states,

> When you read, the teacher don't give you any corrections. . . . She [the teacher] always try to correct you when you speak . . . and always help you to understand and make sure you come on time . . . and when she give you evaluation and your evaluation, she told you . . . you can see how you work.

For these students the structure of evaluations, teacher corrections of written work and speech, and teacher's approach of telling the meaning of certain readings provides a kind of mechanical skill and task-scaffolding they require and consider supportive of their learning.

Curiously the Socializing and more Self-Authoring learners *do not* describe the teacher's role responsibilities *solely* in these more transactive concrete terms. In their perceptions of teacher support and feedback, these Instrumental students seem to articulate, as Perry (1970) suggests, qualitatively different interpretations of their classroom world.[12] Few of the other students mentioned a quasi-enforcer quality to the teacher–student relationship. In fact, students bound by the Socializing and Self-Authoring positions specifically recounted the mutual and reciprocal quality of the teacher–student relationship as critical to their learning progress.

Because these students equate knowledge with skill acquisition, they find the classroom structure, which provides ample opportunity for practice, and the many examples the teachers give especially useful. Yvette describes the rule-based examples as helpful to learning, "[teachers] give you good examples what you can do, what not to do."

Jean, like Yvette, also cites concrete activities that seem to enhance her learning.

> The different activities. [The teachers] show you different ways to do it. Like there was a book they were reading about bread, and they actually did an activity with it of making bread. I find that helpful, of different ways, when you read a book, of different activities that can go with the book.

Jean, who is transitioning toward the Socializing way of knowing, understands the different examples the teacher shows the students as beneficial to building a repertoire of "how tos" to work with her children. She does not remark on her teachers' need for many ways of teaching to relate most effectively to the students' diverse ways of understanding. Learners operating solely from the Socializing way of knowing say a teacher's repertoire of techniques is helpful. Again, any of these literacy learners will appreciate demonstrations of and exposure to new ways they and their children can learn (especially as some of these students have been educated within a different sort of educational system, in which the teacher informs the student what s/he should know). However, what seems subtly different for these students is that examples are most helpful because they comprise a discrete set of steps or strategies, which help learning. None of these students seem to step back and reflect on how having multiple ways to do something and explore an idea represents a different conception of the *process* of learning.

Students' perceptions of the teacher-student relationship

How the teacher supports and cares: The teacher gives you what you need

For the majority of the students growing away from the Instrumental way of knowing, the teacher–student relationship was conceived as the teacher giving to the student. This sense of support is different from the way that Socializing students understand the teacher–student relationship. For them, teaching and learning is premised on mutuality, trust, and direct expressions of the teacher's care for personal aspects of the student's life. For the more Instrumentalist students, the support (and perceptions of care and interest) the teacher provides seems related to what the *teacher does* for the students to scaffold learning.

Yvette recounts the ways that her teacher's encouragement provides the "push" for student learning and continued motivation.

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[12] For a fuller explication of Perry's (1970) scheme see Helsing's, Broderick's and Hammerman's section entitled "A Developmental Lens" and the "Five Core Premises" they describe in their chapter in this monograph.

> [My teacher] reads a story to the class and after you read you can make a story by yourself, without the paper . . . what this mean . . . everything you're not doing well for the writing, but [my teacher] give something to push, push, push, for everything push, she say, you can improve your writing.

As noted earlier, the teacher's interaction with the students provides the confidence to continue to learn. Yet this interaction is cast in more one-way transactive "doing" terms in which the teacher gives confidence and motivation to the students.

Jean, who may be slightly further along in the transition toward the Socializing way of knowing, portrays the structure of support and her teacher's help in a slightly different way. Here, in a way reminiscent of students operating from the Socializing way of knowing, she discusses the benefits of how her teacher goes over the material. Yet Jean's depiction is less about the way "going over" stands for the teacher's investment in her or represents the teacher's validation of her ability. In Jean's discussion of how her teacher helps her, she seems to indicate that in going over the material, the teacher aids her agency and prevents a sense of helplessness.

Jean poignantly describes her teacher sitting with her to show different ways of doing a math problem and emphasizes that the teacher will not leave until she knows Jean understands the problem. This is a difference, she says, between her learning experiences in high school and Even Start. Jean describes the scaffolding and support her teacher provides:

> [My teacher] sat down and showed me the ways to do (this geometry problem) with a ruler or a little circle thing, or a calculator, or just different ways of doing it in your head or on paper . . . It was important because I was stuck. My experience in high school is they show you once, and if you don't understand once, they don't help you again. And at least [my teacher] **makes sure you get it before she leaves you to do it on your own.** And I think that's helpful for me.

This support is critical to Jean's confidence and sense that she can learn. Interestingly, Elena, (who operates from the Socializing way of knowing) recounts how she, too, felt unsupported in her high school classes. Strikingly different, though, are their interpretations. While both women felt somewhat demoralized by their high school experiences, Jean talks more concretely about the help she now receives from her teacher, who gives her what she needs to get the knowledge. This giving by the teacher so the student "may get" is understood as support and a kind of caring. Elena recounts how this teacher understands and never humiliates her or makes her feel stupid. This teacher–student dynamic makes Elena feel able to ask questions and comfortable making mistakes. In Elena's construction of the teacher's help, she is focused less on the concrete information she receives and more on the internal psychological validation she receives for her own knowledge and learning process. One is a more concrete take on the supportive presence and help of the teacher, the other, a more abstract internalizing of the teacher's regard. Both understandings, however, are perceived as supports and esteem boosters. In each case, the teacher protects the student from feeling helpless or unworthy.

Students growing from Instrumentalism perceive that giving time and attention to students is a demonstration of support and positive teacher–student relations. Indira, an ESOL student from

Southern Asia, believes the teacher has a responsibility to give students her time. She seems to feel teachers should focus attention on the students with the greatest needs and interest. Speaking about her son's trouble learning to use the computer, Indira links the teacher's care for and interest in her son's learning to the [lack of] time she sets aside to help him.

> Teacher don't have time . . . (my son) is in class he attend, but he don't use computer, how can he? This is responsibility of teacher. But teacher don't give the time. My thinking, my opinion is who the student is with, the full time is spent (with) who need it, who is interested. Teacher told me, but teacher don't have her time. How (then) the teacher make the student good of English, good of knowledge.

For learners growing from Instrumentalism, support seems measured in the equality of treatment the teacher accords her students. Teacher support, interest, and fairness link to students receiving equal time, equal praise, or equal advice. Fairness, support, and care are seen as equivalent. For students in transition to the Socializing way of knowing but still making sense in more concrete ways, fairness may be understood as a kind of measurable quantity. The sense of whether the teacher cares may rest or fall on observations such as Yvette's of her teacher's behaviors and interactions with other students.

> I think Even Start is good, but sometimes in my class . . . teacher is (praising) only one student in class, "Oh, she is good. She is good". . . Teacher is always . . . "Student is correct. She is good." But sometimes only one student is good. . . . She is only six months learning English, . . . and I get hurt feelings. This is not good feeling . . . She don't use good word for me but (for) another she use.
>
> Every student are same. You are teacher. You give the same advice. Only the one student is not important for you. Lot of students here. How make the future in this student? This is your responsibility, how can I teach?

For some of these more Instrumental students, the teacher demonstrates her support for and interest in her students by solving the student's problems. Here, Indira equates her teacher's interest [or lack of it] with help in solving a problem in her son's school.

> My teacher very nice teacher. She help me and sometime she ask, "Any problem?" But she not solve this problem. I depended (upon) a teacher and principal [at son's school?] to solve this problem. But teacher is not interested, you cannot solve.

Some of the students bound by the Socializing way of knowing mention the ways their teachers go beyond their roles and advocate for them when they feel overwhelmed or exploited by an insensitive institution. When their teachers speak out on their behalf, these students say they feel emboldened and validated. In contrast, Indira seems to expect her teachers to solve her problems, and when her teacher's action is not forthcoming, she sees this as a lack of support, interest, and care.

Socializing Ways of Knowing

What the students expect from their teachers and their conceptions of teacher support

The teacher as the source of learning: How the teacher "helps you understand"

Similar to their Instrumentalist peers, the learners operating from the Socializing way of knowing see the teacher as a main source of authority. To be sure, they continue to view the concrete practical-mechanical aspect of instruction as important. We understand this focus on the more concrete elements of learning as these students' sense that the teacher is the source and expert on what one *should know* to be a fluent speaker and literate person. For the literacy learners at Even Start, who are mostly members of a foreign culture and learning a new language, the teacher takes on the expert's role of helping students master the technical skills of speaking and writing. As we've said, almost all of the students across the developmental positions remarked that they expected their teacher to attend to the more mechanical aspects of teaching, such as checking the assignments and correcting papers and their homework.

Socializing students state they wanted their teachers to be flexible and to use several ways and a variety of examples in teaching them. As Felicia appreciatively reports,

> she gives a lot of suggestions so we can work about that. We don't . . . she doesn't really follow the rules. She work how we can learn.

Unlike the way students growing from Instrumentalism understand the teacher role, Socializing students do not conceive it primarily as a rule-bound trainer or an enforcer who "makes you learn." Rather, teachers are seen as guides or encouragers who are "patient, kind, and help you understand." This relational aspect of learning seems particularly important to the students in this developmental position. For the most part, Socializing students believe their knowledge originates outside themselves and give the teacher responsibility for what they should know and even should want to learn—still receptive sense of how learning happens. The most consistent element expressed about "how the teacher helps you learn" related to how these students perceived the teacher's personality as inherently kind and supportive. They saw this nurturing and supportive teacher–student relationship to be critical to their learning. Anna's view of the teacher is emblematic of how a student at this way of knowing may still believe the teacher directs and is at the source of her internal motivation.

> **A good teacher is someone who cares about your learning, about the progress you're making** . . . Like, if you don't understand something, they help you . . . They can help you to do better. Like sometimes [my teacher] always say like, like she always look up what we do for the year, and if we have to work on something, so **she tells us, she says, like, we been doing this, now if you have to do more reading or more writing.** She says you been doing this, you're doing better in this now you have to work on . . . or sometimes she ask us what we can, how we can [learn] . . . Sometimes they don't know what you really owe, where you are or what you really want . . . they do know, but . . . I think they don't want to, to be bothered [to say you] really have to do this . . . **Some teachers want you to tell them what you want to do, like if you think that, "Well, I'm not good in math, I'd like to work on my math" . . . They ask you, "How do you feel?" I mean, I think sometimes you don't even know you like that.** You don't think about it, they

> come and ask you and . . . oh, that make you think about something, oh yes, because you don't think you just . . . Like, [my teacher] show me I have to do work on my writing because I don't do that too well.

For many learners in this developmental position, teachers are the authorities and let you know when you've learned something. Anna assumes her teacher is more aware of her learning needs than she is and appreciates her teacher's assertiveness. In fact, Anna takes her teacher's stance as support and caring. Some teachers may expect students to be more fully self-directing, but Anna points out the way her teacher's feedback makes her think of things in a new and different way. Like many Socializing learners, Anna seems to locate the authority for what she knows, when she's learned something, and what she needs to know and learn in an expert other: the teacher. A more Instrumental construction of the teacher's role might see the teacher as the expert who evaluates your work and tells you what to learn. Anna appears to reflect upon the way that a teacher asking her students, "What do you want to know?" sometimes can help a student learn more about herself and her learning. This suggests a less concrete and more mutual understanding. Nevertheless, these students share their Instrumentalist peers' appreciation of teacher direction.

As Anna says, feeling their teacher cared for them and their progress was of great importance. This idea continuously surfaced as critical to the learning process for the ABE and ESOL learners in this developmental position. A consistent theme is that the teacher's support and care is the foundation of the students' overall belief that the teacher is invested in them and their learning.

> Like, they [the teachers] help you learn, to learn what they're teaching you . . . If you don't understand something . . . you could go over until, until you understand it. . . . Just she always ready to answer your question. She want to, she's always waiting to talk . . . to ask what small [thing] you don't understand what can she help you with . . . They help you or they give you special time without school where they can help you if you don't understand something . . . if you don't understand, you just come to them and then they sit down with you and help you to do it, to understand what you are learning . . . and showing you how to do if you don't understand how to do it.

Not unlike students growing from Instrumentalism, Socializing knowers understand teacher support as going over the material, giving the student time, and being available to explain how to do the work. Yet, going over the material is somewhat more than participating in the drill of skill-learning. For students in this developmental position, teacher supports seem equated most strongly with the relational aspects of the teacher-student interaction. Elena put it this way:

> My teacher, she's great, she works with you no matter who you are, and she doesn't give up on the students.
>
> She knows so much. You can ask her anything and she knows. . . . and she's so interested in your learning that you learn. She cares so much.

Going over the material and working with the students appears to be interpreted as the way a teacher demonstrates care. These students seem to view the teacher as a kind of abiding presence who has knowledge and implicitly regards the learning progress of her students as important. Elena seems to articulate that the teacher's willingness to work with every student is internalized as care for the student, that the student, in turn, internalizes as a kind of positive regard for herself and her own learning. This notion that a teacher invests in you as a person and takes you and your learning seriously seems to undergird these students' ability to take themselves seriously. Perhaps because so many of these students are foreign-born and have met with difficult circumstances and, in some cases, racist responses, it is especially critical that their teacher never "give up" on them.

Unlike their more Instrumental peers, Socializing learners conceived the learning process and the teacher-student relationship as more reciprocally interactive. In a sense, these learners believed they could and should be more active participants in asking the teachers to help them with specific knowledge they wanted to learn. Raquelle sees her teacher primarily as a respected expert and learning resource. However, she also describes the relationship between teacher and learner as active and mutual. She appreciates that she can bring her interests to her teacher and that her teacher welcomes, works with, and validates these interests.

> The hard words so I brought them to her so she can explain to us. And sometimes when I have time I read some history and she corrects them for me, the vocabulary . . . Last time for the summer and something I asked her to do and everybody can profit from what we've been doing.

Felicia, who is in the ESOL class, feels similarly. Asked what helps her learn, she describes how her teacher is responsive to the students' suggestions.

> We ask her, please if we can practice more in that things, and conversation, and reading, I don't know, past tense, future tense. We told her. We give to her a lot of suggestions. . . . Yeah, and she work with us. She say, "All right."

In a way quite distinct from those learners more on the Instrumental side of the developmental continuum, these students do not believe the "teacher makes you learn." Raquelle describes this viewpoint.

> If they don't want to do the work, the teacher is not going to push them. Because they're not kids, they're adults . . . maybe she (the teacher) think she going to hurt their feeling or she not going to be happy. So if you do, you do it, if you don't so something she can't [make you learn].

Students' perceptions of the teacher–student relationship

How the teacher supports: Personal caring and personal advocacy

> "The teacher helps you feel important and accepted...she never forget you."
> "They listen to you . . . she helps us in different problems, not just English."

For learners operating from the Socializing way of knowing, mutuality, trust, and care are the salient features of the teacher–student relationship. These students believe the teacher supports the students by establishing a context of care and empathy. Socializing knowers tend to focus and comment on their teacher's personal qualities. The qualities they most value are kindness, nurturance, and patience. These seem to help the students feel comfortable and create an inclusive, nonshaming atmosphere of acceptance in which students feel free to ask questions and make mistakes. The students seem to gain a sense of personal power or permission from their teacher's implicit acceptance. In a way, the teachers almost "lend the students their learning egos." Again, while we would imagine that many learners appreciate and require a welcoming environment, these students' perception that their teachers care and are kind may be critical to their view of support and their engagement in learning. We surmise that the primacy teachers' personal qualities have for these learners relates to the fact that individuals operating from the Socializing way of knowing tend to evaluate themselves according the evaluations of others. From a developmental standpoint (Kegan, 1982), one's identity, including one's identity as a student, is *made up of others'* opinions of oneself. The two are inseparable—"how I feel about myself is inextricably connected to how you feel about me." Thus, it is notable that all of the students in this developmental position mention the value of their teachers' kindness, patience, care, and acceptance.

Moreover, for these learners, teachers' acceptance may serve to correct past negative encounters. Elena, one of the most highly educated ABE students, compares the atmosphere of care and unconditional regard her current literacy teacher creates with the competitive learning environment she recalls her high school teachers established.

> [Everyone in the class] is so nice, and that's something that [my teacher] makes happen, you know? . . . because she makes everybody feel so important, that no matter if you're new, no matter if you're short, small, fat, pretty, ugly, you know,

> whatever, everybody's the same—very important in the class. When somebody comes and she just introduced all of us and everybody has to introduce, she's talking about something important, like somebody from the PBS channel come in . . . some, some students came late. She [the teacher] doesn't say, like, "You're late." . . . So she stopped and said, "Oh this is __, she's from this country" . . . and everybody is very important, you know?

Elena contrasts this feeling of acceptance with recollections of feeling shamed and stupid in high school.

> I remember I didn't know English when I was in high school, and in my English class, I was shaking all the time, like, "If he asks me that, I don't know, and oh my God, I'm going to be stupid." Oh, it's terrible, the feeling.

These ABE and ESOL literacy students describe the sense of trust in their classrooms. One can imagine how the perceived unconditional regard especially aids these students in hearing the teacher's feedback about mistakes and comments about what they have yet to master. For students in this developmental position, feedback can be devastating. At worst, it can feel like negative criticism or exacerbate feelings of helplessness, that one is stupid and doesn't know. In an atmosphere of trust, caring, and patience, these students appreciate correction and may be able to begin to disentangle not knowing certain material and literacy skills from not being able to know, to separate having trouble with the material or ideas from feeling like a troublesome person or a poor student.

Across their interviews, these learners share appreciation for the fact that their teachers listen, are respectful, and involve themselves personally in their students' lives. This personal relationship fuels these learners' trust and connection to the class. Felicia describes the primacy that a personal teacher–student relationship has for learners at this particular developmental position.

> They listen to you . . . she helps us in different problems, not just English. She helps us in different things is we have problem and **she never forget us, for example, in birthdays.** [*Why is that important?*] They, we have a lot of [trust].

Here Raquelle describes the way feeling respected aids learning.

> When I met [my teacher] I said she's a good teacher, people can learn and explore everything if you want from her. Because she's really good with people and she had a lot of respect for us, even if we are adults. And she respects us very much and anything, any problems you have, you can explain to [her]. She's always tries to help you. She's a very good teacher, a really, really good teacher.

Along with Felicia and Raquelle, other students consistently and explicitly mention that their teachers' help with their personal problems is important. These Socializing knowers feel emboldened and encouraged by their teachers' advocacy and intervention on their behalf. We surmise that for these students, the teachers' intervention provides models of proactive behavior and self-assertion, which these students may internalize. Moreover, such advocacy implicitly validates the students' concerns and their right to speak out. While any student might feel distressed and disempowered by confusing or outright marginalizing experiences, an individual bound by this developmental position might be especially vulnerable to intimidation by others, believing she should not voice her confusion or feelings of injustice for fear of offending others or garnering disapproval. Elena is particularly vocal about the ways her teacher has helped her manage a difficult situation and navigate the local traffic system.

> In my class there's one teacher, and she's very supportive, very super nice, a great teacher . . . just everything good you can say. Even things that maybe she doesn't have to deal with, she helps you, you know? I remember I always drive here, and I had my car, and my car was towed once, so I didn't know what to do at all, you know, like I didn't know where to go, I didn't know anything. So they helped me a lot with that, and they told me where it could be where it was exactly, they located my car. They told me the way how to get there . . . Everything you need, they help.

Elena goes on to recount another situation in which her teacher advocated for another student.

> I remember . . . something happened to a girl in the other program and the other group. She was coming on the bus with her son, and the bus driver was really, really rude. . . . and she was telling the bus driver, "Please, calm down." Everybody was like crazy . . . once, he turned left, and her son banged his head, like real hard, because he was really rude driving. And so she even cried. She was real upset because she thought she was unpowerful to do something against him, you know. So she came here and she said that to my teacher, and my teacher called the transportation department, and she told everything that happened and really was complaining about the way he was driving. So it was very good, you know.

In contrast to their Instrumental peers, students bound by the Socializing way of knowing appreciate the way their teachers introduce them to larger ideas instead of just focusing on skill development. These students seem to want the curriculum content to incorporate knowledge and information that is relevant and helpful to the larger context of their lives. Elena comments on the way a culturally relevant curriculum is different from what she learned in her home country. She prefers the U.S. model, finding it enables her to be more culturally competent as a person and a parent.

> It's like a very different way of learning. Like, when you are in high school and you are here. Because I think here you are learning more important things. Like, you know what I mean? In high school you have to have, like, eight subjects everyday, you know. **But here you just learn what is important for you at the moment and why and as a person in the society, in the community.**
>
> . . . here because we are parents, they always teach us things that help us, like if they talk about science, so they speak, we read, we do research and talk about like some problem, like diabetes, like asthma that a lot of people in my group have children with asthma, so they learn more things about asthma . . . **So it's nothing that you don't need I your real life.** They are things that you use. . . . and they are things that your children will learn in school and we can help them with. You feel

> frustrated when your children do at home homework and then you have no idea how to help them, you know?

As we acknowledged in the previous section on guiding and teaching, several of these learners mention that this knowledge was important to enhancing their parenting capabilities. Additionally, learners operating from the Socializing way of knowing appreciate the ways the teachers' assignments invite them to reflect upon and voice their opinions about U.S. cultural practices. This response to the work their teachers provide is unlike that of their Instrumental peers, who make no such remarks.

Elena provides a good example. Here, she recounts appreciation that her teacher shared information about a current government initiative to support child development. What she enjoys the most, however, are the questions her teacher appends to the article describing this initiative. These questions invite Elena to reflect on and express her own opinion of this initiative.

> Yes . . . everyday they teach us. . . . the teacher give like a little bit of everything and also every day she gives us like a paper maybe from the medicine or maybe from the newspaper, something that she thinks is very interesting and has something to do with the particular time or thing we are doing. . . . the last paper she gave us was a paper about, I think something about the governor is trying to help the newborn babies, like give them to mothers, a basket to all the mothers that have a newborn baby, a basket with classical music, storybooks, you know. So it's telling that, no matter if it is very, very small, it is good for them to listen to classical music because . . . the classical music makes the babies more smarter in the future . . . And also when they are like eight, seven months old you should read to them because maybe you think they are not understanding but they are getting used to the reading and enjoying since they are so small. . . . **then it is a page with questions and the last question says, make a letter to the governor, like . . . agreeing or disagreeing with him and tell him which is the best part you think about what he is doing and how come he can improve it or if there is something wrong. It is very interesting.**

Belenky et al. (1986) comment on the way knowers in this developmental position begin to claim the authority of their own minds through just such invitations to express personal opinions. Although the expert authority—the teacher—may be implicitly validating some cultural values and information, she is simultaneously supporting and explicitly promoting the importance of differentiating one's own ideas from those of the accepted and powerful authorities.

Growing Toward and Reaching Self-Authoring Ways of Knowing

What the students expect from their teachers and their conceptions of the teacher support

The teacher as one source of learning: "She learns from me, I learn from her"

The Self-Authoring students seem to bring their capacities for critical reflection, independent evaluation, and self-directedness to their expectations for and assessments of their teachers and the learning process. Unlike their classmates, Self-Authoring learners did not conceive of their teacher(s) as the primary or sole authority for their learning. Teachers were an important but not the only source of learning. These students were able to *simultaneously* respect their teachers' authority and knowledge and entertain the possibility that their teachers may not "know everything."

Dalia provides a good example. She states:

> Sometimes **[the teacher] didn't get a chance to do the research, so I knew a little more** . . . . If she don't know something, she will get on the computer, she will find the books at the library or at the [literacy] center. Sometimes she has to find answers elsewhere.

Dalia seems unthreatened by the fact that her teacher, whom she greatly respects, sometimes has to look things up. This stance toward the teacher as knowledgeable yet fallible is different from the more Instrumental or Socializing students' view. As we previously noted, Belenky et al. (1986) and Perry (1970) suggest individuals who are in the Socializing position commonly perceive their teachers as experts and authorities who know the "truth." These students typically find it difficult to consider their teachers in anything less than global, either/or, dualistic terms that sound like this description.

> They [the teachers] are always more or less right . . . they assume that all authorities are infinitely capable of receiving and retaining "the right answer" with impeccable precision . . . they see only blacks or whites, but never shades of gray. (Belenky et al. pp. 39-40; p. 41).

In keeping with this belief in teacher as authority-expert, students who construct their world from either Instrumental or Socializing perspectives tend to perceive the teacher–student relationship as more receptive and authority bound. To recall the words of Elena, "My teacher . . . she knows so much. You can ask her anything and she knows." In contrast, the Self-Authoring learners understood that students sometimes know more than their teachers and that teachers learn from students just as students learn from their teachers.

As previously mentioned, many of the students who were Instrumental or Socializing knowers relied on their teachers to direct their learning. The structure and help provided by the teacher were integral sources of their motivation to learn. Although Self-Authoring and Socializing learners share an appreciation of their teachers' willingness to address their interests, Self-Authoring students frequently came in with their own learning agenda and notions of subjects to study. Unlike their peers, Self-Authoring students held themselves responsible for their own learning progress. One student, Ho, describes the shift he experienced toward developing a more internally generated motivation for learning.

> Before, I thought . . . teachers . . . you know, they supposed to know, that what I would think. But now I know it's up to you. If you don't want to learn, nobody can tell you nothing. Nobody can put nothing in your head unless you want them to give [it].

Dalia details the way she feels she can share her own learning interests with her teacher, who is very responsive. For this student, her teacher's willingness to help her meet her own goals is an act of support. However, this support is not the source of her motivation to learn. Dalia's motivation comes from within.

> . . . if I have a question . . . before I had to search . . . I have tried that, not knowing how . . . trying to figure out on my own, by just looking at the example [here in the interview Dalia offers many examples of difficulties she's had trying to understand and learn fractions]. But now I can come here [come to the classroom and the program] and say, "Hey, [says her teacher's name], look what I found. Show me how to do this" . . . and she could help me with the problem.

In general, these students seem very aware of both their learning styles and the limits of their independently pursued knowledge. They take a perspective on the ways that, as ESOL and ABE learners, they may become blind to their own mistakes. Unlike their peers, they do not depend on the teacher to tell them when they've learned something. Rather, they conceive of the teacher as a resource to help reveal the errors and lapses in their understandings, given their self-recognized tendency to overlook some of their learning gaps. This is a significantly different stance toward their learning process than the other students hold. Here, these Self-Authoring learners realize that they may be unaware of their learning problems and seek a respected resource to help them improve their breadth of knowledge. They are able to step back and take a perspective on themselves as knowers and learners, and actively seek feedback and constructive criticism to become more competent students. In a sense, these students conceive of the teacher as one who aids in their learning process versus someone who imparts what they should know. Dalia put it this way,

> **When you're learning on your own, when you make a mistake, you're the only one who knows you make a mistake and sometimes you don't even know if you made a mistake.** But when you're learning with somebody [the teacher] that can help you and give you new ideas how the word is written and how you read it, how to find it in the dictionary and where the word came from . . . I know now when to read and pause . . . which before, I never think about or put any punctuation and commas, and I didn't want to put that dot on the "i" . . . **and even if you sometimes you're trying to correct your own writing, you can become blind over doing it because you don't know, because you're doing it and you're the one who's correcting it, you overlook things.**

Hamid echoes a similar insight and belief about what he appreciates and expects from a teacher vis-a-vis his own learning process.

> You do yourself, but someone has to advise you or helping you. Maybe you don't know something somewhere, maybe you're not seeing something.

Students' perceptions of the teacher–student relationship

How the teacher supports: She attends to the learning needs, strengths, and weaknesses of each student

> "She pay attention to everything of the student . . . A good teacher understands different possibility to [help] students understand."

Building on their conceptions of the teacher as someone who helps advise and facilitate one's learning process, Self-Authoring students construe the teacher–student relationship somewhat distinctly from their peers. Students growing from Instrumentalism felt attended to when the teacher gave them the concrete skills they needed. Students operating from the Socializing way of knowing constructed the teacher's support as linked to their teachers' empathy, patience, and unconditional regard. Supportive teacher–student interactions were cast in relational terms located in the teacher's personal qualities. For those students, the teacher's patience symbolized her nurturance and validated them as capable learners. In contrast, Self-Authoring learners seemed to connect their notions of teacher support to their own

theories of the learning and teaching process. Thus, their expectations for teacher attention and scaffolding derive not from a primary need to be nurtured but from self-generated ideas about the process of education, which they consider a path to self-actualization, enhanced personal mastery, and self-discovery.

These students believed their teacher's support primarily emanated from her skills and interest in focusing on individual students' abilities. Thus, Self-Authoring students' visions of and expectations for teacher support related to their assessment of their teacher's professionalism and expertise. These students brought this evaluation to their understanding of how and whether the teacher effectively engaged with each student to remediate weaknesses and develop strengths. In a way distinct from their peers, they held their teachers accountable for meeting the needs of each student and to balance individual attention with the needs of the group. To these Self-Authoring learners, such attention demonstrated the teacher's investment in both her profession and her students.

Across her interviews, Ahara consistently describes what she thinks comprises good teaching and support for learning. She relies on her own evaluations of the way her teachers assess and address the students' learning abilities. This reliance on her own standards and authority indicates the way individuals in this developmental position see themselves as the source of their values. Ahara describes what she expects and requires of her teachers.

> **I saw them [the teachers] what they doing by my eyes, and I work with them . . . How good [they are], how they nice, what they say, what they do.** [A good teacher] has to pay attention for all the students the same thing. And you have to know who need more help, how this student have English, because you have all people working with you.

> . . . **very important to ask the strengths.** She teach not the same last year. She teach different way every year. **What she compares the strengths and what they** [the students] **need and . . . those strengths they [the students] wanted.**

For Ahara, a good teacher has a flexible teaching style that may change from year to year to better meet the students' needs. Ahara believes a good and supportive teacher simultaneously balances the needs, learning requirements, and personal goals of each student with the needs of the whole group.

Ho, an ABE student from Southern Asia, articulates a similar belief. Here he describes what he considers good teaching:

> A really good teacher have to know what the students like, like their ideas or their explanations. They [the teachers] have to understand them. . . . A good teacher is good as long as she understands different possibility or different ways to make students understand the way she taught or explained any topic . . . Because some teacher can just stood up there and explain all day and students sit down here and wouldn't pick up a thing . . . when I stop into any new classes or anything, I'm always aware of is, is that a good teacher? Will I have problem with her? I always ask that and answer just for myself.

Ho also has a complex understanding of the ways that the teaching and learning process happens. He understands that teachers need to use different methods depending on student learning styles. He construes the learning process as supportive (or unproblematic) when there is a good fit between the teachers' approach and the students' way of learning and understanding. He has his own criteria for this and assesses whether his teachers will offer this support. He wonders whether a particular teacher will be good for him. Ho expresses the shared understanding among Self-Authoring learners that support is about the teacher's ability to maximize and build upon the students' learning strengths.

Hamid likewise locates teacher support and concern in the ability and interest in meeting each student's learning needs and agenda.

> You [the teacher] have to pay attention to what the student is saying . . . maybe you teaching something, you talking something else . . . maybe students don't like it . . . teachers have to know what they're teaching . . . [pay] attention to everything of the student . . . exactly how some high, some low, and the low ones you have to push. They have to get to that goal. . . . You have to make sure they get the same attention.

Hamid develops his criteria about what is helpful and supportive one step further and describes the value in the teacher paying ". . . attention to everything of the student." Later he suggests, as do several Self-Authoring learners, that supportive teachers understand the students' life context and make allowances for the complexities and priorities of their lives.

> [The teacher] have to know some have a family . . . who have a family have too much problem . . . why this person may be late some times, maybe why leave early.

One can read this statement as a belief that a supportive and engaged teacher needs to respect learners as people. Perhaps this is a bid for recognition of one's whole self premised in the capacity to define one's identity as the composite of many selves and many roles. This is a distinctly different construction of the teacher–student relationship than that of Socializing students, who look to their teachers for validation and acceptance. Socializing knowers also mention they want their teachers to consider their life situation, but their meaning is somewhat different. As we suggested, these students appreciate their teacher's involvement in their whole lives. They especially welcome their teacher's advocacy and help in navigating difficult circumstances. Self-Authoring students do not seem to seek this mode of advocacy. The sort of teacher engagement Self-Authoring students seem to desire is a kind of equalizing recognition. In the above excerpt, Hamid seems to state his requirement that his teachers understand, respect, and dignify the complexities inherent in an adult learners' life. He wants his teachers to consider the many competing role responsibilities learners balance. In sum, Self-Authoring students' interest in teacher qualities and definitions of support are linked to how they expect their teachers to join their drive for competence and mastery.

Learners who are growing toward or have reached Self-Authorship still want their teachers to spend time correcting their skills, even if this is not their primary definition of support. They also continue to mention their teacher's personal qualities of patience and understanding as helpful. Good instruction is construed as a good mix of skills, ideas, teacher concern, and care all enfolded into an expectation that teachers be proficient in their subject and attentive to individual and group learning needs. Linn, who is transitioning to Self-Authorship, notes her expectations for support and good teaching.

> Good teacher have to proficient her subject, also loving and understanding of students. Have to prepare for the classroom, organize the class. Have to know how to explain if the student can't understand when have to give another example, another message.
>
> She understands all students. I think she have more patience and more sympathy for the student. Most of the time she encourages the students. When I write something, some homework, she reads it carefully and she checks my grammar and vocabulary and she said to me, "It's very wonderful job." She encouraged me and at that time I want to, I can do. So it's very good for me.

Hamid and Linn seem to connect the teacher's personal qualities to explicit scaffolding of their capacities. Hamid states:

> Good teachers have good face . . . that is big help for a student . . . some are fast, some are slow . . . you have to know which one is weak, which one is strong.

How the teacher supports: She sets a context of stimulation, ideas, and challenges

> "Every day the teacher had new ideas . . . learning wasn't just one way, everything is perfect."

Unlike their classmates operating from the Socializing way of knowing, who want their teacher to create an atmosphere of empathy and unconditional regard, Self-Authoring students seek a learning atmosphere marked by educational challenges and constructive feedback. Unlike their peers, these students consistently note they want their teachers to establish a learning context of ideas, stimulation, and creativity. Teachers provide the structure for the students' self-directed learning and the informational backdrop for students' interests. These students appreciate it when their teachers integrate cultural information with academic content. Self-authoring students focus on knowledge that includes but goes beyond skills. As previously discussed, they expect and hope their teachers will create a space for studying contextual-social cultural knowledge, which they actively use to acculturate.

Hamid demonstrates how important such a mix of skill and contextual learning can be for students in this developmental position. He recounts a story in which he transferred from Even Start to a different ABE program, hoping it would provide even greater challenge and knowledge. Hamid was disappointed by the other literacy program's curriculum. In his view, the program he transferred to, and ultimately dropped out of, did not offer Even Start's rich interdisciplinary background. He felt this other less satisfying literacy center focused more on skill learning than acquisition of broad knowledge. Learners who, like Hamid, are in this developmental position, typically rely on their own judgements and standards to ascertain when they are being appropriately challenged and stimulated.

> I leave [Even Start] last year . . . I transfer to the other program. . . . but I don't like what they teaching, no. . . . because I saw [it was] back too down. [*It was too simple?*] Yes . . . and when I went there . . . this is what it looked to me like wasting time and I left. . . . [I was learning] more at Even Start...yes, we studied social studies, science, history. . . . [*You wanted more information about subjects than just about reading and writing?*] Yes, exactly, that's it. . . . [at Even Start] we have different nationalities there . . . yes, from Africa, from the Caribbean, from Europe, even from United States. . . . That was wonderful . . . studying different cultures, different history, what it is exactly the people, how they live in different areas . . . Yes, we all of the time talk about culture, especially what is the government of the country, how they are run, what they do.

It is interesting to remember that Elena and several learners operating from the Socializing way of knowing also appreciated learning personally relevant information. Yet we discern a subtle difference in the Self-Authoring calls for an integrated, broad-based curriculum. In keeping with these learners' capacity for systems thinking, they may particularly prize learning about the ways various cultures and governing institutions operate so they can actively participate in their adopted culture. As these students have an understanding of the constructed nature of culture, broad exposure to other cultures may facilitate their ability to intentionally compose their own cultural identity, a key task for these individuals. Yet gaining a broad-based education in which literacy skills are integrated into a larger curriculum may be syntonic with how these students conceive of education as a contextual process of self-enhancement and overall enrichment.

Dalia, like Hamid, operates solely from the Self-Authoring position. She also expresses excitement and pleasure in her exposure to such broad-based knowledge. She particularly values the way her teacher introduces new ideas and current information into the classroom.

> I always believe . . . good teachers make a good school. It's really people that make things good. It's not good things that make people good. So I think it's having good teachers and having people who are really always looking for new things to teach us. And always trying to makes us do things like using the computers, and go on the Internet.
>
> My teacher's ideas of work to do [has helped her learn the most]. **She stays up to date with everything in the newspaper and the Internet and what's going on around the world and what's up in [our city], in different cities,** and we celebrate every holiday, **we learn new vocabulary and we get test on them.**
>
> Every day the teacher had new ideas, bringing up new homework, teaching us about new things. She was very creative on giving us assignments. **It became very interesting. Every day I was learning something new.**

We wonder whether Self-Authoring literacy learners may require their teachers to set a curricular context mix of stimulating ideas and skills because they grapple with two important learning goals. Dalia is a good example of the ways these students may bring their Self-Authoring way of knowing to bear upon simultaneously expanding their minds and closing their knowledge gaps and "informational blindness." We surmise that Self-Authoring learners' developmental position 1) enables them to reflect on and create their own trajectory for learning areas in which they would like to become expert and 2) allows them to take a perspective on the learning lags and "educational blindspots" they want to remediate. Listening to Dalia, we see her Self-Authoring capacities serve her particularly well in charting a learning agenda and generating enthusiasm for both information she lacks and the inherent value of acquiring new and emerging knowledge. You might say she displays a kind of internal developmental motivation for addressing her learning lags and interests.

Dalia has a typical Self-Authoring learner's awareness of the evolving, contextual nature of information and knowledge. This is a complex conception of the source of knowledge and beyond the way her Instrumental and Socializing classmates construe it. Once again, we believe such awareness undergirds and further fuels Self-Authoring learners' desire to simultaneously expand their knowledge base and master basic literacy skills. Teachers who do not offer or create opportunities to integrate skills and content in the curriculum risk being negatively evaluated as unchallenging and unstimulating.

Hamid also reveals this complex understanding of the nature of knowledge, unique to Self-Authoring students. He brings together two distinct ideas. Hamid questions a teacher's inherent expertise—a markedly different stance than that of his classmates bound by different developmental positions, who tend to see the teacher as the expert and infallible guide as well as spokesperson for the "truth." Hamid also expresses the unique Self-Authoring perspective that knowledge is constructed and reflective of the particular interpreter's perspective and bias. Thus, Hamid demonstrates a developmentally linked insight that Self-Authoring students may find stimulating (and others may find threatening): the notion that history can be interpreted differently by different people. Instead of assuming there is one historical story line that must be understood to "know" history, the Self-Authoring learner can grapple with history as a variety of renditions, and that context determines what is remembered, how it is remembered, and whether it is "official" history.

In speaking with an interviewer about how he knows when he's learned something, Hamid interjects the idea that there may be competing and different interpretations of ideas (here, history) that teachers transmit. He also knows that teachers are not "value neutral" in the way they teach. Such a realization may also amplify these students' appreciation for learning contexts in which teachers encourage multiple perspectives.

> But you know the history, maybe history stands on two sides. There is some true history and some made history . . . if you want to know the history you have to go back and know what different tools, different ideas, different ways you have to look at [how] that's true or not . . . you know if I teach you something . . . maybe history, right? but maybe I'm lying . . . Well if *I* become a teacher, I will teach the truth. I don't like a lie.

Dalia articulates a similar insight into how there are competing interpretations of and multiple perspectives on any idea. Like Hamid, she suggests these are helpful.

> [In class] we can sees the right of [a problem] and the bad of [it], you know? It wasn't just . . . one way . . . everything was perfect.

Finally, learners growing toward or reaching Self-Authorship consider their teachers role models and exemplars. But unlike the way Socializing knowers may focus on the personal qualities of their teachers and/or adapt models of advocacy or internalize their teachers' instructional approaches or values, Self-Authoring students seem to conceive of their teachers as mentors or models for self-directed paths to self-actualization and the realization of their potential. They appreciate teachers who give them opportunities to meet and connect with individuals with a certain degree of mastery and competence. Dalia describes the motivating power such exemplar models may have.

> When the education lady came by . . . that was very important . . . because I'm mostly intimidated when people are smarter than me . . . but I think I grew out of it . . . You can hear about people all the time, but until you talk to them and realize, she had kids like me, and works hard and that really influenced me of going home and work[ing] even harder because if she make it, I could be able to make it, too. And she was another bigger influence because she is my racial background.

Students' Understandings of Peer Support and Group Scaffolding

One of the unique features of the Even Start program is its open-ended nature. Students may remain in the program for different amounts of time depending on their learning pace and progress. Thus, the sample of learners we interviewed varied considerably in the number of months they had participated in ABE or ESOL classes before the study. Despite this open-ended quality to the classroom experience and the possibility for changes in the group configuration, there seemed to be a palpable and certainly a student-reported sense of group cohesion. The peer groups within each class had the tenor of a cohort. They persisted as and identified themselves as a group of students actively engaged with and committed to each others' learning and well-being. The majority of the Even Start students we interviewed deemed this group experience important. Like students at our other research sites, the Even Start learners indicated they greatly appreciated their respective ABE and ESOL classmates' academic and emotional support. It is important to restate that although the ESOL and ABE classes were taught by different teachers, these teachers reported a shared dedication to creating a welcoming and responsive classroom atmosphere in which students respectfully listen to and helpfully engage with their peers. To this end, the teachers regularly discuss classroom dynamics at their staff meetings. Here, the ESOL teacher depicts the sort of atmosphere she strives to facilitate.

> My goals are really to . . . be able to continue to refine that process, that give and take—what motivates people, what keeps them going, how you keep people bouncing off each other so that, that kind of atmosphere you see here, **so people feel they're not only getting something for themselves, but they're giving to someone else.** Because not only is that a good idea, so to speak, but **it helps everybody learn.** It makes everybody feel . . . **the more you feel you have to contribute, the more you're learning yourself, the more giving to others**—to, that's what makes the world work anyway, when it does, and not having that is what makes it not work—that's oversimplified. **So I care about it.** So my goal is to continue working on that, refining that, looking for ways to make that happen.

From our readings of the students' comments, it would seem that the ABE and ESOL teachers are successful in establishing this supportive atmosphere of "give and take." Moreover, the Even Start program structure intentionally incorporates opportunities for student sharing through the parent and child time and the parent discussion/support group components, which occurred weekly.

Although the Even Start program has two distinct classes, students with the same developmental position, regardless of their class placement, reported similar ways they believed their peers enhanced their learning and comfort. In other words, students perceptions of peer support seemed defined by their way of knowing. Analyzing the learners' descriptions of their cohort experience, we discern that peer group interactions overall served to scaffold individual learning while offering social support.[13] However, how the particulars of such scaffolding and support were perceived differently depended on the students' way of knowing. Next, we describe the forms of peer support the students said they received and found helpful. We also highlight the ways such scaffolding affected the information they learned and the interpretive lens or way of knowing that filtered acquisition of new knowledge.

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[13] Our colleagues in Chapter Six have noted similar functions of the cohort in their chapter on the Polaroid site. For a fuller description of what they delineate as the three functions of the cohort, we refer the reader to their chapter in this monograph.

Growing Away from Instrumentalism

Students who are growing away from Instrumental ways of knowing mention the ways the group experience affords opportunities for exchange of information and concrete help. Especially through the parent discussion time, peers act as resources to each other, offering ideas and practical solutions about handling parenting problems. Yvette, an ESOL student, describes the "give and take" exchange of information in which there is a sharing of opinions and advice.

> You have an idea but another person has an idea and can help you. Is a good idea, it can help you change.
>
> Sometimes I have discussion with other students. You give your opinion. I give my opinion, they give their opinions. Sometimes I discuss . . . If you like that you can take something, something good you take it. If it's something they know . . . you see it that way, you can do this.

We surmise that for learners growing from Instrumentalism, like Yvette, this sort of informational exchange successfully fosters a collaborative approach to learning that joins these students' preference for rules and guidelines and stretches their tendency to focus solely on their own needs. On the one hand, such sharing speaks to these learners' notion that an idea's value lies within the idea itself and it is recognized by its utilitarian nature. The parent discussion/support group time is helpful because one can get ideas that work; it is a market-like construction of information exchange. As Yvette indicates, students share ideas, strategies, and rules that can help change the parent's and/or child's behavior, in a sort of product-oriented approach to help. On the other hand, this information exchange fosters a growing awareness of the different perspectives each student brings to the group and may encourage a student in this developmental position to begin to see things as others may.

Moreover, the group exchange of practical information is premised on the notion that sharing and listening to each other's differing ideas may provide helpful information for oneself. Collaborative learning may be viewed as Instrumentally valuable. Thus, for these learners, like Yvette, who are transitioning into the Socializing way of knowing, the cohort experience, which explicitly requires sharing diverse views and opinions, nurtures tolerance for and appreciation of multiple perspectives. It may also scaffold the beginning steps to internalize others' values, opinions, and ideals as implicitly mattering to oneself. This is something we earlier noted was true for Yvette in the way the group helped her reflect on and incorporate the value of being patient with her son. Trudie, an ABE learner, comments on the way the parent discussion group helps her take in the Even Start value of understanding one's child's development. She similarly seems to adopt such peer advice in a "how to" way.

> The parent discussions help you more understand how to help your child development, by their reading, writing and . . . you can go home and help them, so then you learn from the child . . . you read more with the child, show the game.

The exchange within the cohort also supports a simultaneous understanding and appreciation of one's own culture and cultural diversity, again understood in rather concrete terms. Here Yvette depicts the expanded understanding she gains by talking about different cultures with her peers. Through this exchange, she gets a fuller sense of how her home country and those of the other students are similar and different. She believes this understanding is important because of its utilitarian value.

In a way that may be typical for learners bound by a more Instrumental perspective, Yvette depicts the concrete, observable differences of dress and behaviors that distinguish one culture from another rather than describing the cultural practices and customs as reflecting distinct values. Nevertheless, this peer-sharing fosters her cultural literacy.

> You know some cultures have the custom but my culture, no. You know, some culture like another people have costume, for is to show your culture, but my culture you can wear anything, is special dress for wedding . . . different costumes for the culture . . . I think it's a good idea to learn something you don't know . . . it's important, you didn't go to all the culture, but you need to know if . . . you have idea to visit, you will know how they work.

Finally, a few of the more Instrumental learners within the ABE and ESOL classes point to the social support and camaraderie their peers provide. For Yvette, the feeling of friendship within the class is important because it makes it easy to share. She also notes the commonalities among the students, despite their cultural diversity—everyone is a parent. Yvette seems to appreciate the community of concern the cohort embodies. When a student misses a day of class, classmates inquire as to her well-being.

> We work together with our friend . . . we talk together and everybody is friends . . . we share food from different culture, we sit together . . . make little party . . . when some friend not come and not at school we ask our teacher, what happened to her if she not come? But the first times nobody know everybody, but after we was together, we share some things . . . other people, surprise when they say something, you say, "Oh." But some people have something is same [in] my country . . . But if not share something, you don't know . . . if you have some idea you can share, you can share something good they can take . . . we discuss . . . because everybody has children too.

For Jean, the ABE classroom atmosphere is one of safety and welcome. She, too, receives considerable social support from her classmates and articulates a feeling akin to that of the more solidly Socializing peers. For Jean, the environment of peer support is "like being at home."

> [Coming back to school] It was[scary] at first, but everybody here made if . . . they welcomed you in. It was a scary thing, ok, I'm going to go back to school, is it going to be okay? You know, you see new faces, but, no, everybody welcomed everybody in. So it, it was nice. It felt like being at home.

We hypothesize that the cohorts' emotional and social support, which norm peer friendship and the home-like group feeling, resonates with these learners' transition toward Socializing ways of knowing. Socializing knowers feel especially affirmed through empathic connection and communities of acceptance and similarity. Thus, it may be that for students growing away from Instrumentalism, such a communal atmosphere amplifies, scaffolds, and promotes the move toward the Socializing developmental perspective.

Socializing Ways of Knowing

Those students bound by the Socializing way of knowing consistently emphasize the relational aspects of peer support. For these learners, the cohort experience serves as a way of decreasing isolation, venting pressures of life, and easing the transition into U.S. culture. Many of these students liken their class atmosphere to being in a family in which they feel known, recognized, and appreciated. Felicia passionately describes the care and personal regard she derives from the cohort. She implies her teacher sets this tone of welcome and personal interest, which the students readily adopt.

> The school is not really the school. **The school is like your family,** . . . so everybody know each other. Everybody trade—no like she is my classmate, "Hi, how you doing, bye." You know, we take care everybody. We know each person . . . [My teacher] bought cake for everybody, every birthday we remember.
>
> Everybody want to talk with them [when a new student arrives] with her, him . . . you know if they can feel comfortable with us if they can feel . . . like to you know, "This is my family. Welcome to family!"

For so many of these students, the classroom is a safe haven of friendship and connection. Elena, too, derives social support from the group.

> . . . when I'm here I feel like, not like, but kind of like a family.
>
> . . . everybody here cares so much for each other and I think that's so good. . . . they become like part of your family . . . maybe not your family, not that much, but your friends.

Sarita echoes the same sentiment,

> [*How is it now for you with all the students?*] You know, they are friendly. They talk with me if I couldn't understand something, they help me. They help me . . . they explain to me. And we always talking about, we are come from every other country, different country, and when we talk about country, about family, and it's really help. And like a friend. Yeah, and now, I'm happy.

Such a context of care and connection is syntonic with Socializing knowers' developmental orientation to mutuality, reciprocity, and attunement to others' feelings. Moreover, immigrant learners operating from this position may find the family-like atmosphere especially corrective to the potential distress of acculturation. For individuals bound by this developmental perspective, perceptions of being different, outsiders, or marginalized are particularly threatening to the self. We surmise the family ambience may provide a kind of transitional community of care that smoothes the process of acculturating into a new social-political system.

For a few learners, peer support also provides emotional scaffolding and regulation. In the context of the cohort, Elena, for example, comes to understand and gain perspective on the difficulties of her own situation. Newly arrived in the U.S. and parenting alone for the first time without her mother's help, Elena feels overwhelmed and stressed by her situation. While she draws comfort from knowing others are in a similar situation, realizing other students have even more stressful circumstances seems to give Elena perspective on her own situation, and she begins to feel less run by it.

> And I see here that everybody, I'm not the only one, you know . . . that everybody in my situation the same as me, like because it's my life changed 100 percent. When I was in my country, it was very different. You know what I mean? Like, if I was tired, my mother go something, or my children are to school. **She can help me with everything. . . . I mean here, in the beginning when I moved, I said, "oh my God, I'm going to get crazy"** . . . But then when I came to the program, I knew everybody was just in the same position as me. . . . it's a consolation for you, you know what I mean? . . . But anyway, **when I saw that it comforted me a little bit**. . . . Yes, that it was not just me—that everybody in this country lives the same way as me. And then I realized . . . **this is what I have to live without getting crazy.** Yes, when I saw that, I was everybody is just like me. Living here . . . everybody lives in a small place, **everybody had to deal with children and things** . . . I have two [children] but some of them have eight, seven, five, you know. Yes imagine. So I say, "Oh my God, I'm like this" . . . in my class I have friends that they have to support three, five, like. I am learning, you know.

Earlier in this chapter, we recounted how the home visitor program and parenting curriculum helped Elena learn ways to both redirect her son's ebullient behavior and interact with her children in a satisfying way for extended periods of time. Although we cannot know from Elena's statement above, it is interesting to speculate whether the skills she's gained from the program, combined with the cohort's support and modeling, help her regulate the stress she feels in having to manage her children alone. By observing others in similar parenting circumstances and listening to their suggestions, Elena may recapture a kind of auxiliary authority and external source of emotional regulation she originally derived through her mother's support and guidance but lost upon moving to the U.S. Kegan (1994) comments on the way that "communities of mind" bound by common values, norms, and practices may provide the developmental scaffolding we would associate with the emotional containment Elena describes. He writes:

> . . . the community's collective consciousness itself . . . is the source of order, direction, vision, role-creation, limit-setting, boundary management, and developmental facilitation. . . . The vision or overarching theory or ideology that directs life is provided via a corporate canon or creed that exists not in some lifeless text or impotent shrine, but in the body of practice, sanction, and prohibition coursing though daily life. . . . such "information" [often] communicates itself in the very fabric or ground of living. We see how we are supposed to handle this or that situation, and how we are "supposed to" is how we suppose we should as well. Handling this or that situation in the supposed ways is not merely the solving of this or that problem but the very expression of our atonement or in-tunement with our community. (p. 104)

Kegan states further that for Socializing knowers, such information, which is woven into the fabric of daily life, represents an important way they may "be supported to resolve the [Self-Authoring] tasks of adult life, such as those intrinsic to parenting" (ibid.). Extrapolating from his insight, we wonder whether Elena discerns from the *fabric of classroom life* and the *cohort community consciousness*, the way she, as the primary caretaker, *should* manage her own stress and patiently respond to her children's abundant energy. For Socializing knowers like Elena, the cohort may represent a kind of "Self-Authoring borrowable mind" (Kegan, p. 105).

We believe it is important that this *cohort community consciousness* offers an internalizable model of how other immigrant parents manage and cope with similar difficulties while it offers emotional acceptance. Modeling a new approach in the context of empathy and care seems to underlie Elena's emergent capacity to enact limit-setting on both her children and her own emotional distress. This modeling of and support for new responses and interpretations of stress implicitly situates the students' life experiences as a source of knowledge and expertise. Elena may be internalizing the notion that, in fact, students as well as teachers or elders (such as her mother) may be credible knowledge holders and have sufficient wisdom to resolve their own problems. Thus, we surmise that Elena is emboldened in yet a third way to begin, when she is developmentally ready, to conceive of herself as an authority on her own parenting practices. While Elena is not yet conceptualizing herself in this manner, we hypothesize that her experience within the cohort community consciousness may help her move psychologically toward this understanding in the future.

A few other students receive a different kind of emotional information through participation in the cohort. For Anna, the supportive peer interactions provide a context in which she may take a perspective on the way she may misperceive or misjudge her classmates. This interpersonal context enables her to strengthen her "relational intelligence." Describing some of the ways she's changed, Anna speaks about her observations of her classmates and the process of judging others.

> Sometimes when you don't know people, you judge them . . . when you know the person better, probably you feel another way about that person. I probably was wrong about what I think about that person, just because you don't know the person . . . then sometimes you just [think] "Oh, she has a look" . . . sometimes that happened to me . . . when you talk to the person, you can see that person from the way you judge, just taking a look at the person . . . When I first came to the class, I was . . . I feel more embarrassed with the students, now I get used to them. I've been here with them for [a while] then I don't feel so embarrassed like I was before.

Almost all of the students mention the cohort and the parent discussion/ support group as an important opportunity for peer supported learning and a chance to expand their repertoire of parenting practices. For Socializing learners, these discussions appear to support their preference for models and "how to" suggestions while simultaneously encouraging sharing of diverse experiences and perspectives. Across the classes and within their narratives, they highlight the valuable learning they receive from their classmates.

> For parent time, it's really nice. Everybody has different discussion, different ideas and you learn from them and they learn from you and it give you some time to relax yourself and not to worry about home. So when you come to this program you're happy in a lot of different ways. (Raquelle, ABE student)

> You can learn from other parents, like experience from the kids and things like that

> . . . Other parents can share their experience, I think it's a good idea because somebody learn. You can get a lot from others to help you. (Anna, ABE student)
>
> A month ago I think, we start to talk about discipline. It was beautiful because each parents start to tell their own experience. Every parents was to share how they handled the problem, if for them work, how they children said, everything . . . And we talk a lot about that. We share experience, and we get a lot of advices too, from my teacher and from anybody . . . Because I learn a lot. I am feeling like, too, "Oh I'm not the only person what happened to me.". . . So in that class about the discipline we learn about a lot. . . . Everybody talk about what we can do . . . how the kids feeling, how we can teach the kids feeling for [others]. (Felicia, ESOL student)

These discussions call on students to share their opinions and expertise. In doing so, there is a subtle invitation to the learners to begin to rely on their own authority and parenting knowledge. However, the peer exploration of opinions and experiences seems bounded by the overarching Even Start developmental parenting approach. Nevertheless, these learners find support, companionship, and help through these regular discussion times. Felicia describes the complex way the students share their opinions within the larger context of the "borrowable mind."

> [parents' discussion group] It's a very good idea because everybody have examples. Everybody have a different situation. So they can share with us.
>
> You know, everybody not agree. That they say, "Oh, no. I think that . . ." You know, we share if somebody not agree, so we talk about that. And you know, help. Help with, sometimes another mother, maybe she doesn't, you know, she took a wrong way. So we try to help her, explain.

Finally, Socializing knowers, like their more Instrumental peers, appreciate the recognition and exploration of cultural differences which permeate cohort sharing and filter through the parenting discussions. Sarita, an ESOL parent, alludes to the ways that multicultural perspectives toward parenting are integrated into the discussion. Additionally, cultural literacy becomes a salient feature of peer learning.

> . . . we come from different country that have different culture . . . Everything different. We discuss and we learn something from, **maybe other country is good, maybe other parents they teach something is different. I will try that, and everybody is different.**
>
> Well, because we talking about, we learn many things, we come from many countries and we can learn or we, we are talking about their country and also we learn many countries' culture and many, many things . . . Yes, other people come from other countries. They have different culture, different opinion, everything is different. And we know. . . . We enjoy it. We learn too. We enjoy it with other students, they come form other country. We don't know their culture, their customs and when they are talking about their culture and their country, we know it and we

> learn . . . They want to know how in my country and so like I can tell them. They learn too, my country's culture.

Once again, the combination of peer discussion of cultural differences and the celebration of unique cultural perspectives importantly validates and affirms these students' heritage. We earlier noted British anthropologist Brian Street's (1997) concern about the potential subversion of immigrant learners' appreciation for their home country culture within literacy programs. At the Even Start program we researched, teachers and peer sharing seem to lend authority and significance to both the student's home culture literacy practices and legitimate cultural knowledge as a valuable, practical, and an important academic focus. Such explicit backing of cultural literacy by those in authority is particularly important for Socializing knowers who still tend to see their instructors as the shapers and directors of the knowledge they should know and learn.

Growing Toward and Reaching Self-Authorship

In contrast to their Socializing peers, learners who were growing toward and reaching Self-Authorship did not spontaneously describe or emphasize the cohort's family-like atmosphere. While these more Self-Authoring learners noted their peers' welcoming attitudes, they most appreciated the expression of feelings, information, and ideas, which they used in service of self-understanding, social support, and self-expansion.

Linn, perhaps the most vocal in depicting the emotional support she gleans from her classmates, says:

> I enjoy the relations with the other students. Time we meet three times a week, and then sometimes we can share our life, my life, each life, and also . . . we are not American people, so sometimes we can share our anxiety and our stress about language, and that's good.

Hamid and Ho describe their ABE peers as friendly, nice, and a group that's easily entered.

> All the time is you know, very nice group, everybody was friendly. (Hamid)

> [*What does the group mean to you?*] Good. Enjoy them. Most of them have wonderful ideas and they wanna [be good] parents too. Of course anytime anywhere . . . if you new, kind of shock, embarrass in a way, but then you get used to it, they so friendly. (Ho)

Dalia, like Ho, links peer support as the background to enhanced learning. She views her classmates as a kind of push to motivate herself more.

> It's a good program because it's like a support group. I feel very supported here, that I am to learn because that's something I didn't have before. I was the only one supporting myself to learn, the only one pushing myself in the back. I'm not saying people are on my back pushing me, but they are there for me, so the fact that **they are there for me to learn, that makes it even easier for me to push yourself** and say, there are people here to support me, and that's going to give me a hand to help me.

Overall, these learners view their peers as educational resources, particularly during the parent discussion time. Similar to their Socializing peers, learners transitioning toward Self-Authorship appreciate sharing a range of parenting knowledge and experience. Linn comments on the value of these discussion times.

> This program sometimes we had a parent discussion time, we discuss their child is happy, that their child is acting. We can share each other and sometimes we read the magazine about the latest development about the reading problem. After reading them, I can adapt my children.

Ho, who perhaps has the least parenting experience among the learners, also appreciates receiving suggestions from his classmates.

> Sometimes we learn stuff from other parents, new ideas and information . . . [*So how did they teach you about patience?*] Oh, I give you example. Like they have a how to be a good parent. Last time we discuss. When [my son] want to read a book or whatever, or colored pencils, if he don't like it, perhaps you put it away for a while and then try to make something else for him to do instead of let him sit there and get bored with it and throw things around. So just pick something out and later jump back to the topic again. So you can just go back anytime, instead of "No, you can't do it." We discuss about it in parenting class last time. And we get different ideas from other parents.

For some learners, like Dalia, the ideas of others are integrated with one's own.

> Like I was getting other people's ideas, and then I was trying to put my ideas, I was getting more ideas.

Self-Authoring learners appreciate the intellectual and cultural diversity the peer group brings to discussions of parenting and the more academic learning. These students seem to seek out differences of opinion, culture, and experience instead of finding comfort in similarity and sameness. We hypothesize that this appreciation of difference is in keeping with a more Self-Authoring stance toward learning, in which an individual may view such diversity as providing opportunities for growth through strengthening and/or comparing of one's ideas and beliefs with those of another.

Ahara believes such a focus on difference is important to her learning as an individual acculturating into a new country and as a parent. Over and over, she expresses her preference for peer discussion that centers on issues of cultural difference.

> . . . [the other students] have different culture. They have different language but when you meet them, they learn from me. I learn from them. . . . [*which are you most interested in?*] [Parent discussions] because they have different people, they have different idea.

> They're helping me a lot. Very important adult talking how discuss issues children, how to learn, how the system in America is different. Because I have different culture . . . in other class they learn many things about another people, for different country, different opinions.

Ho describes his attitude toward differences of opinions which, as noted above, he both appreciates and evaluates.

> I . . . listen to other peoples' opinions and ideas, but compare their ideas and my ideas . . . think about it see what would happen.

Ultimately, it may be possible that the cohort experience is of less importance to learners growing toward and reaching Self-Authorship. Both Dalia and Ho indicate that while they value the support and ideas of their peers, they primarily rely on their own independent judgement, self-authority, and self-defined learning agenda. Dalia relays her understanding of the difficulty she encountered when expressing her opinions freely, sometimes to the irritation of her peers. Dalia eventually left the program for what she described as scheduling conflicts with her daughter's school.

> I think it bothered them I was there. I mean even toward the end, I felt comfortable there . . . but they didn't feel comfortable with me until I was gone. I guess because my knowledge, I didn't hide it. I share it too much. And I feel like some of the students in the class wanted me to keep it to myself, what I know. . . . but I showed them that I still have a lot to learn . . . no matter what anybody else thinks or said, it didn't matter to me because I was there and I was gaining something.

When asked to characterize the influence of the cohort upon his learning, Ho explains:

> I don't pay attention, I've never been too concerned about them . . . I think I'm enjoy too much of what I had learned to so I don't pay attention to other people that much.

In summary, learners who are transitioning to or have reached Self-Authorship appreciate the diversity the peer group offers. They note the welcoming and friendly atmosphere the cohort provides and seem to view this as a backdrop to their own self-motivated learning. These discussions join their preference for exposure to multiple perspectives and sharing personal experience and insight. Peer discussions help these learners expand their self-understanding. Additionally, Self-Authoring students view peer sharing as a vehicle for analyzing and critiquing information. Self-Authoring students appreciate this sort of forum for critical thinking and reflection, which they understand as important to enhancing their competence as parents and learners. However, Self-Authoring learners may ultimately be able to stand apart from group approval if their expressions of opinion or belief are not well received.

Safety and Accountability in the Classroom: Supportive Learning Environments

Marsha Chevalier (1994), an instructor of literacy methods at the University of Delaware, raises what she asserts may be a common but not well explored instructional dilemma adult ESOL (and we would include ABE) educators face:
". . . how to establish an affectively safe learning environment while holding students academically accountable?" (p. 1). Citing the work of Prabhu (1992), Chevalier (1994) characterizes this "safety-accountability dilemma" as located in the tension between two competing student and teacher goals: "protection and learning." She writes,

> On the one hand, learners, especially adult learners, entrust their self-esteem to the teacher's care and expect, rightfully, that it will be handled gently . . . On the other hand, learners also entrust the direction and facilitation of their learning process to the teacher and expect, also rightfully, that their individual gaps in knowledge and skill will in time be bridged. (p.12)

As developmental psychologists also interested in developmental approaches to adult education, we recognize this instructional dilemma as familiar. We suggest that applying adult developmental theory may be particularly illuminating and helpful in recasting these tensions *not* as mutually exclusive but as variations in the ways learners, bound by different ways of knowing, may differently construe and experience classroom safety and the facilitation of learning. We reconceive dilemmas of safety and accountability as concerns about teacher and peer support and challenge. The questions then become these: What are the different ways learners at different developmental positions construct ideas of safety (or support) and facilitation of their learning (or challenge)? How much support and how much challenge should an optimal learning environment offer its students?

In considering such questions, it is important to clarify what we mean by optimal learning environments, support, and challenge. Here, we draw upon the work of Kegan (1982, 1994) and Daloz (1986). Our notion of optimal learning environments specifically derives from and builds upon Kegan's (1982) concept of the holding environment, which he defines as the psychosocial context in which and out of which a person grows. The holding environment simultaneously relates to how the person makes sense (her way of knowing) and the literal social psychological surround (of support and challenge) in which she finds herself. Applied to the field of education, a holding environment is a comprehensive learning milieu. It entails a dynamic relationship between the learner's way of knowing and the educational context through which she is learning and growing. This context includes, for example, such educational elements as teacher–student and peer relationships, curricular and programmatic expectations, and norms inherent in any pedagogical ideology.

To better understand our definitions of support and challenge we refer to the writing of Laurent Daloz (1986, p. 215), who describes educational support as:

> . . . the activity . . . of providing a place where the student can contact her need for fundamental trust . . . It means moving to confirm the student's sense of worth and helping her to see that she is both okay where she is and capable of moving ahead when she chooses.

In other words, support joins and acknowledges a person's way of knowing, affirming how she thinks or feels. Educational challenge relates to moderately challenging how a person makes sense and feels just enough so as to provoke cognitive dissonance, or a "gap between one's perceptions and expectations" (Daloz, 1986, p 223). From a developmental educator's point of view, we challenge with the hope of raising questions, creating some internal conflict, and exposing the learner to new perspectives so she may eventually grow beyond her current way of knowing. Optimal learning environments offer a good mix of support and challenge appropriate to an individual learner's developmental position as well as a good mix for a classroom of learners who likely operate from different ways of knowing.

A key idea here is that learners at different levels of development will understand and define support and challenge differently. Thus, if we offer the same support to two students who are at different levels of understanding, it's likely that each person will experience this support differently. For example, being praised for following the intention of an assignment and admired for a job well done might feel quite supportive to a learner who operates from a Socializing way of understanding. As we've described elsewhere, for a student with this way of understanding, the teacher's evaluation is synonymous with her own self-evaluation. On the other hand, a student who operates from a more Self-Authoring way of knowing might find such praise unhelpful. This student might prefer a teacher's direct feedback and detailed constructive criticism as valuable and caring support. For this student, the teacher's evaluation is helpful insofar as it enables the enhancement of her own competence according to her own standards. Self-Authoring students would most probably look for more than the teacher's personal affirmation and admiration. This seemed the case for the Self-Authoring learners at the Even Start site. We suggest that in creating learning contexts of safety and accountability it may be both advantageous and important to know a person's developmental position to offer appropriate supports and challenges that will be understood and experienced as helpful.

In our study, the Even Start students report a range of desired supports and challenges that coincide and are consistent with those described in the developmental literature. Moreover, as we have argued, we found the ESOL and ABE learners in our study who operated from distinct developmental positions construed peer and teacher supports differently, while learners bound by the same way of knowing expressed desires for peer and teacher supports that were quite similar.

Developmental perspectives on teaching and learning may therefore inform the design of optimal learning environments in another important way. When educators consider the *goodness of fit* between the expectations of the program and the expectations *and developmental readiness or capacity* of the learner they successfully address potential dilemmas of safety-accountability. In our view, learning is enhanced when there is a *good match* between the learner's developmental position and the implicit developmental demands of the program. Here we are speaking about paying attention to the developmental capacity, curricular expectations, learning tasks, and teachers' requirements of the learner. As several adult educators caution (Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1994; Mezirow, 1991; Weathersby, 1976), if a program's expectations aim far beyond a learner's developmental position, she may become threatened and retreat. Conversely, if a program's expectations are too low, a student may become disengaged. Thus, knowledge of a student's developmental position in concert with an awareness of the program's implicit developmental demands may help educators offer the most appropriate educational supports and safety while they reasonably challenge and facilitate students' learning progress.

To better understand this question of "goodness of fit" between learner development and program expectation, we offer this table below which highlights the developmentally sensitive supports and challenges of optimal learning environments for students at different developmental positions. It represents a synthesis of developmental educators' thinking and research of the ways optimal learning environments may simultaneously join a student's way of knowing and appropriately encourage or challenge him to grow beyond his existing perspective. We also advise the reader that, for learners who are transitioning between two ways of knowing, the contextual supports and challenges need also span the developmental positions.

Table 4: Optimal Learning Environments

Optimal Learning Environments: Components of Support and Challenge

Context Supports & Affirms:	**Context Challenges & Requires:**
Instrumental ways of knowing	
Focus on goals, needs, information, activities, skills that yield concrete results, showing "how to" Provides highly structured learning environment where teacher focuses learner attention and success through concrete examples, rules, guidelines about how things should be done Teacher acts as instructor, trainer, and role model	Encourages shift away from weddedness to self-interest, needs, concrete view of knowledge solely as means to self-gain Links consideration and internalization of others' perspectives, needs, ideas, feelings as means to achieving successful results
Socializing ways of knowing	
Focus on capacity for abstract thinking and generalizations, concern for others, reliance on teacher authority, desire to please teacher (i.e., be a good student) Provides structured program which mixes presentation of skills and general information with opportunities to analyze information, reflect on, and critique different points of view, debate opposing positions Teacher acts as role model, guide, and mentor	Encourages shift away from reliance on authorities and experts as sole knowledge holders; gives permission for and challenges learners to rely on own expertise and knowledge; encourages and requires questioning of expert knowledge; fosters critical thinking and multiple perspectives
Self-Authoring ways of knowing	
Focus on affirmation and promotion of individual's view of self as theory maker and constructor of ideas and opinions; welcomes personally generated insights and learner created paradigms Provides open learning environment contexts for reflection, discontinuities, paradoxes, and process Teacher acts as mentor, exemplar model, facilitator	Encourages shift away from learner's over-identification w/ own ideas, theories, values; encourages self-critique, self-awareness, and understanding of constructed, relativistic nature of one's preferenced beliefs, values, ideas Links self-mastery and enhanced competence to process-oriented understanding/approach through dialogic, dialectical forms of learning

Adapted from Daloz, (1980); Kegan, (1982, 1994); Popp & Portnow (1998); Portnow, K. (1996); R. Weathersby, (1976).

Effective Components of Support and Challenge in the Even Start Program

The Even Start learners' depictions of their preferred and actual teacher and peer supports, as well as the student and teacher interview data in tandem with our understanding of the five program components and curricular mix of skill and theme-based learning,[14] all suggest that the Even Start family literacy program successfully joins the majority of the students' way of knowing. We find that, overall, students feel well-met and well scaffolded. We earlier suggested and continue to wonder whether certain key aspects of the program especially challenge learners growing from Instrumentalism while they support and simultaneously invite the growth of students bound by the Socializing way of knowing. While such an in-depth review of all of the program features is beyond the scope of this chapter, we will next highlight some cross-cutting developmental supports and reconsider a few features of the Even Start literacy program that seem noteworthy as developmental challenges.

Parent and Child Simultaneous Learning (programmatic supports)

The Even Start program structure enables adults and children to learn at the center simultaneously. Parents attend their ABE or ESOL class while their children participate in the preschool program. While this design may not seem immediately significant, quite a number of adult students reported feeling this feature was quite important to their learning, and in some cases, to their continued attendance in the program. Interpreting their statements through a developmental perspective, we surmise that this structural feature is an important and respectful developmental support. It certainly is mentioned frequently by learners who are either bound by the Socializing way of knowing or moving toward and reaching Self-Authorship.

> The best part is I can study with my son. If before . . . I couldn't study, it was because the old school doesn't have a child care . . . So that's why I can study, otherwise I can't. The best thing is because I'm a mother, I have two children's and before nobody can help me about baby, you know, child cares for them. But his program have a child care. So I can study, and I can stay with my son too. . . . I was excited, I was, "Oh boy! I can't believe it." Finally I get my school. Finally I can learn English. I was like that Everything was beautiful for me. (Felicia, Socializing knower)
>
> Yeah, I also I thought what I'm going to do, you know? You know, I thought I was not going to be able to study back here. Because I thought my kids too small, the small one . . . There was the people told me then that I have to pay here for taking of him during the day for a month and I say I'm not going to pay that much money. So I have to stay with him the whole day. So, I'm going to be, I'm going to get dumb, you know, doing nothing. (Elena, Socializing knower)
>
> If he didn't like to, to the classroom, I have to give up my class because of my children. That's very important for me. (Linn, transitioning to Self-Authorship)

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[14] We base this interpretation upon our analysis of longitudinal student interview data, interviews with teachers in which they describe their program goals, a few classroom observations, and our review of a small sample of classroom assignments.

In our view, students like Felicia and Elena, who are bound by the Socializing way of knowing, as well as those who are in transition toward Self-Authorship, like Linn, especially benefit from attending a literacy program with their children. Learners bound by or transitioning out of Socializing ways of knowing tend to feel pulled and stressed by competing loyalties and role demands and may have a hard time prioritizing these competing requests for their care. It is common for women who make sense from these positions to subordinate their own needs in favor of the needs of their spouse, partner, or children (Gilligan, 1982, Rockhill, 1991). When a literacy program offers these learners an opportunity to attend to their own learning needs while they simultaneously support the learning needs of their children, the programmatic structure forestalls the likelihood that these students will abandon their own development for the sake of their children. In this way, the program may contribute to retaining these students while it resolves a key dilemma for them.

Teacher Response to Students' Competing Role Demands (teacher supports)

By the same token, the teacher's personal response to the these students' expressed pressures, given their complex lives and competing role demands as well as the "reasonable" expectations for extracurricular work (such as homework), make a great difference in the students' perceptions of support, consideration, and safety in the classroom. Once again, if students bound by or moving from Socializing ways of knowing feel they are neither meeting their teacher's expectations, the program's requirements, or their families' needs for care, they may experience a particularly high degree of stress, as others' approval and positive evaluation implicates the way these students evaluate themselves. However, we also assert that students growing from Instrumentalism and those reaching toward or operating from Self-Authorship will appreciate teacher acknowledgement of the pressures they face in their multiple roles as parents and students. In our view, learners' different developmental positions importantly direct the ways they interpret their teachers' sensitivity to their life stress.

> So since November, December, January . . . it was very hard for me to be . . . with my kids in the tiny apartment and you know with that plus having classes that giving me stress or problems, I couldn't stand it. So I'm so happy in this program. **Because there is nothing that gives you stress or give you a hard time.** So that's something I like so much about this program that you learn but it is also very relaxed. (Elena, Socializing knower)

> That's one of the most things I like from the program. **That it's not stressful at all.** It's very relaxed. Here because they know we're parents, so we don't have that much homework. They teach us what they can during the morning and we learn and we share everything. [*So you felt very supported by the program?*] Exactly. (Elena)

> Every morning I am very busy to ready for all my family members. I have to help with the homework. Then I have to prepare for dinner. And then my life schedule is like that. **So I don't have much time to study at home.** I want to study more at home, but I don't have much time to study at home. (Linn, transitioning to Self-Authorship)

> She [the teacher] always kind, **she understand my situation.** Always she listens and she understand. **If I'm missed a class, she teach me the missing part. If she**

> **has the time.** At least she told me what they did study during the class. Yeah, then making me more comfortable because I miss sometime during the time, that makes me more catch up the classroom. Always she served the student, she want to listen to the student. (Linn)
>
> The understanding make more good relations with the teacher and students. It makes me very comfortable to learn here. **If I didn't have a really good relations with [my teacher], when I miss that many classes I don't want to go to the school again. Because I want to stay home because the school is going faster, and I can't catch up there.** But [my teacher] sometimes call me, what's happen to your family and then I explain my situation. So she sympathize with me. . . . If the teacher understand the student's weakness, and she don't have enough time to study at home, and if the teacher understand the student's situation, the teacher give another, shows another choice to student [that's helpful and makes it easier to learn]. (Linn)
>
> . . . you have to know some have a family . . . who have a family have too much problem . . . why this person may be late, sometimes, maybe why leave early. (Hamid, Self-Authoring knower)

Several literacy researchers (Gadsden, 1996; Malicky & Norman, 1996) have commented on the need for literacy programs to recognize the complexity of the lives of adult literacy learners. We believe Even Start affords such recognition to its students through its programmatic structure and the teachers' response to students' own expression of the challenges they face in balancing multiple responsibilities. We view this teacher attention to the difficulties inherent in some adult literacy learners' lives as a way they understand and respect their students' decisions and priorities.[15] For example, as Hamid reports, sometimes he may put his family first and he may be late to class or need to leave early, even though he is dedicated to his own learning.

Curricular Mix of Skills and Theme-based Learning (curricular support and challenge)

According to both students and teachers, the Even Start curriculum integrates specific skill learning and more thematic and experiential educational approaches. We see this as a helpful curricular mix that joins the learning preferences and capacities of the majority of students. This mix specifically connects to a more Instrumental focus on skill learning that yield results, and several of the students growing from Instrumentalism appreciate the concrete examples their teachers and peers offer. These examples and skills support Instrumental knowers' drive to "become somebody" which, as we saw earlier, often translated into learning how to "do" things and gain literacy skills. Literacy skill learning also supported Socializing knowers desire to better connect empathically with their children. However, the incorporation of theme-based topics is important to and joins Socializing and Self-Authoring knowers' developmental interests. Earlier in this chapter, we recounted Elena's pleasure in learning information that was personally salient and helped her with her "real life." Dalia, too, appreciated learning relevant and current information that maximizes her potential.

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[15] We do not mean to suggest that teachers always agree with student decisions. Based on our teacher interviews, we note that sometimes teachers help the students reflect on and evaluate their responsibilities, including their school work. Thus, students are scaffolded to set realistic goals for themselves and understand the consequences of not meeting these goals.

While students across developmental levels may appreciate this blend of learning material, we believe such a mix gently challenges students growing from Instrumentalism and may help expand the reflective thinking and self-perspective of Socializing knowers. By offering assignments that require students to put themselves at the center of their own writing and thinking and by asking them to consider and write about their own views and reflect on their lives, we believe Instrumental learners are subtly pushed to engage in learning that transcends mere learning of practical skills. Moreover, while Socializing knowers may appreciate the opportunity to reflect on their feelings and experiences, asking them to make these the subject of their work tacitly acknowledges the value of their knowledge and encourages them to literally see themselves as the authors of their own story. Additionally, assignments that require these learners to offer their opinions encourage and validate the sense that they are legitimate knowers and implicitly call into question the notion that there is one truth.

Linn, who is transitioning toward Self-Authorship, is particularly articulate about the transformative power of some of these assignments. They help her to "make her mind more wide."

> To get another new ideas, to learn new things, is happy with me. Yes. To know new something. [*What helps you when you're learning?*] If it makes my mind more wide.
>
> And then I got assignment [to think about her childhood] and talk with friend. When I got assignment, I record my childhood. I can record my childhood and ask her ages time and then, it's a very good because that same way, this time, I'm thinking on the present in this life and when I recall my back life, I think my feeling very emotionally and also I miss my old friend and then I decided to have touch with my friend continuously.

Teacher Feedback, Class Evaluations, and Invitations to Set the Learning Agenda (teacher support and challenge)

Chevalier (1994) raises important questions about how teachers may give supportive feedback to their students. In our study, the students consistently seem to suggest that their ESOL and ABE teachers give direct, constructive, yet supportive feedback. Contrary to what Chevalier seems to believe, the students in our study seek feedback from their teachers and the way this feedback is delivered does not appear to put their self-esteem at risk. Students want to know how to speak properly. They like to have their vocabulary tests corrected and be shown how to do something. They like to get a sense of their own blindspots in learning, as Dalia indicates. Yet these teachers may successfully support and challenge their learners in the ways they deliver feedback and invite student evaluations of class learning. While learners at all developmental positions seem to appreciate clear and direct feedback, students growing from Instrumentalism and those bound by Socializing ways of knowing might find such clarity especially helpful, as they tend to rely more fully on the teacher's expertise in assessing what they need to know.

> I know that if I have something, like, uh, if we are like, uh, learning science, if we have, you know, from the book or the homework, and you can read the homework

> and you figure it out, and then the teacher she say if something missing, she check it. If everything alright she tell you. You try your best, you do a good job. (Raquelle, Socializing knower)

The teachers also seem able to join the Socializing students' need for supportive nonthreatening criticism which is accompanied by a recognition of the student's ability and implicit motivation and desire to please.

> When I was in school before, everything was so stressful, you know, like tests and if the teacher's going to ask about this, if I don't know I'm going to be stupid in front of the class. And here it's so relaxed. That's something good I have. She never says, "No, no, you're wrong." Any classroom it's always just, "That's wrong," and [they] just stop you. And she [her current ABE teacher] says, "Well, I understand your point of view but I want something more complex or that could give more of what I mean." So that's something so good in her . . . that she's always supportive and doesn't make you feel like a fool. (Elena, Socializing knower)

However, in the context of support and trust, Socializing knowers may find teachers' invitations to critique the class learning progress an exciting challenge to their reliance on the teacher as sole authority—a subtle challenge to their way of knowing. Here, Felicia describes the way her ESOL teacher gives permission for and challenges her students to give input on the way they learn best and help shape the learning agenda. In so doing, this teacher implicitly challenges these learners' reliance on her as the sole evaluator. Her intervention encourages the students to believe in their own critiques and self-knowledge. It is important to note that both teachers invite student contributions to the learning agenda, and both also direct their students to learning tasks they need to accomplish. *They offer a developmental range of teacher direction* to students who are operating from different developmental positions.

> My teacher, she's terrific. She's perfect. Both are perfect. [My teacher] is not like, you know "Every day we need to do . . . " like she has stuff everyday she do the same thing. We change it. Everybody give some suggestion. What we can do. How we learn faster . . . You know, we try different ways. Every like two, three, four months, I don't know exactly, but every three months we say, "okay, at this point work with us. If we work, when we did that we learn more than before." So we try. We ask her, please if we can practice more in that things, and conversation, and reading, I don't know, past tense, future tense. We told her. We give to her a lot of suggestions. . . . Yeah, and she work with us. She say, "All right." So she try and she get information, and we still need to work. . . . Like, she doesn't follow the rules about teaching, you know what I mean? She works with us, and it's for everybody works, if everybody learn more faster with one way, so we took that way. We still to do that way. (Felicia, ESOL Socializing knower)

Classroom Atmosphere (peer support and challenge)

The two Even Start classrooms are marked by a welcoming atmosphere. As we noted, many students in each class describe the learning environment to be "like a family," filled with feelings of friendship. For the most part, the students recount the cohort as helpful and supportive, though some more Self-

Authoring learners were less concerned with the group experience. Yet as a developmental intervention we understand the cohort and welcoming class ambience to be very significant for learners growing from Instrumentalism and those operating from Socializing ways of knowing. The sense of group, collaborative learning and sharing of ideas developmentally challenges Instrumental knowers' weddedness to their own singular perspective and focus on their needs. For Socializing learners, the cohort provides opportunities to reflect on and critique differing points of view in a safe context. It challenges their way of knowing by inviting them to offer their own opinions, experience, and expertise. It validates their Self-Authority and shifts their focus from seeing the teacher as the primary source of knowledge.

Additionally, the cohort may implicitly support and join a prevailing cultural value of the majority of the Even Start immigrant students—the value of interdependence and specifically the construal of personal agency as linked to a view of oneself as interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). When the students share their expertise to help their classmates, they are scaffolding their own and others' agency in the context of collaboration and interdependence. This sort of peer-supported learning seems to be a developmentally and culturally inclusive structure promoting both *independence* and *interdependence* of mind.

Parenting Education Curriculum (curricular support and challenge)

Finally, we have argued that the Even Start parenting curriculum targets and rewards an approach to parenting premised on empathy and the parental capacity to take and internalize one's child's perspective as a guide for one's own behaviors and beliefs. We earlier hypothesized that in setting these expectations, the parenting curriculum affirms, joins, and orients to the Socializing way of knowing. We have additionally asserted that the implicit developmental demands of the curriculum therefore challenge learners transitioning between Instrumentalism into more Socializing ways of knowing.

Let us for the last time recall Yvette, an ESOL student growing away from Instrumentalism who is a dedicated parent struggling to adopt patience with her son. Let us recall the way Yvette, with the supportive scaffolding of her peers, strives to incorporate the Even Start philosophy and approach to discipline, limit-setting, and punishment. And let us recall that this philosophy entails trying to listen to her child's perspective, to understand his mind and motives in a way that is distinct from the cultural norms of Yvette's home country. Yvette is motivated to incorporate a parenting stance that, as it turns out, is most syntonic with her own preference and desire to parent differently than she herself was parented. In Yvette's case, we find evidence that *certain curricular ideas* (such as the notion of patience) *have implicit developmental demands* and that, with the proper support, these ideas may ignite developmental motion. As we have already suggested, the ideas join, challenge, and, as we saw with Yvette, may build upon and further elaborate an individual's emergent way of knowing.

The Motion of Development: Consolidation, Elaboration, Transformation

Must growth only come through a reconfiguration or transformation of a person's way of knowing? In our analysis of the Even Start students' responses to the parenting curriculum, we noticed that Socializing knowers readily internalized the program philosophy norms because these aligned with the students' emergent ideals. In some instances, the program norms validated values that seemed somehow sequestered yet preferred by the learners. In this latter case, we surmised that students, like Yvette, had determined their parenting would differ from their own experiences of being parented, their home country's expectations, or their observations of less-than-satisfactory parental approaches to discipline and limit setting. In some cases, Socializing learners and even some learners growing toward Self-Authorship—for example, Linn—seemed to internalize norms that were interpreted *through their current ways of knowing.* In other words, the Even Start program most immediately affected *what* the students took in as values, but *not* their way of knowing itself. Yet in internalizing these parenting approaches, we also believe the students were further consolidating or elaborating their emergent beliefs. And we see this consolidation and elaboration as a microdevelopmental movement *within a given way of knowing* that may offer an individual *greater virtuosity* within a particular developmental position.

We also see such a "deepening" of developmental capacity as necessarily taking place within the context of ample support and confirmation. This is particularly necessary for the literacy learners in our study, who, as immigrants to the U.S., are facing multiple sociocultural challenges. We make such a statement because, based upon our data, it seems the learners in our study, as several literacy researchers have suggested (Chevalier, 1994; Chiang, 1991; Ullman, 1997; Weinstein-Shr, 1986), experience affective challenges in dealing with the process of acculturation. Moreover, we concur with Ullman (1997, p.1), who suggests that issues of social identity are preeminent in literacy learners' lives. These multiple psychosocial and political challenges may be disequilibrating. Daloz (1986) has described the potentially growth inhibiting effects that stress and disorganizing affective challenges may produce, in contrast with contexts of support and safety. He writes:

> Under stress, we tend to slip back; we tighten our grip on what feels most secure. When we feel safe, on the other hand, we can relax and reach out. That's why a supportive tone . . . is so important. It lets the student move to her leading edge. (p. 219)

Thus, it may be that for these Even Start literacy learners, the important and considerable consolidation and elaboration of their ideas, perspectives, and values—developmental changes themselves—transpired most smoothly because of *the high confirmation or support* they received in tandem with *moderate classroom challenge.*

Optimal learning environments include an appropriate mix of support and challenge and scaffolding, *sensitive to developmental position and life circumstance*, potentially setting the context for optimal learner performance. In such contexts, increases in individual development may gradually proceed through growth plateaus as well as through the emergence, consolidation, or elaboration of skills, ideas, values, and perspectives into ever-widening integrated systems of thought and understanding (Kitchener & Fischer, 1990). Viewed in this way, *developmentally sensitive contexts then may encourage growth within and/or between ways of knowing.*

V. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Throughout this chapter, we have articulated the impact of developmental position—a person's way of knowing—on learner instructional preferences, goals, and enactment of social identity. We have additionally suggested that for the Even Start adult ABE and ESOL family literacy learners, a context of high confirmation and moderate challenge supported the emergence, consolidation, and elaboration of ways of knowing as well as the development of discrete skills, ideas, and values. We have further argued that any learning environment that is "good enough" must link to and join the student's developmental position while it invites growth from current ways of knowing. Our research with adult literacy learners suggests that students who operate from different developmental positions will appreciate and benefit from different forms and degrees of safety, confirmation, support, and challenge. In each case, a fuller understanding of students' ways of knowing, which undergird their educational and self-aspirations as well as their expressions of personal agency, is helpful and important to teachers and program designers striving to create optimal learning environments.

We return to the insight of Ullman (1997), who reminds us that literacy learners, especially immigrant literacy learners, bring their complex changing social identities into their literacy classes. Building upon Ullman's ideas, we suggest that the programmatic, curricular, teacher, and peer supports and challenges students meet in the classroom are all important influences upon their self re-creation and the ways they view their past and their future. We believe developmental perspectives on adult ABE and ESOL education may powerfully aid students in creating and re-creating futures of increased possibility.

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CHAPTER SIX

"Not I Alone": The Power of Adult Learning in the Polaroid Cohort

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> Well, . . . [in] math, like when they were talking about "x" equal that, [it was hard] because I didn't know what "x" and [what] all those things were. Not just me, alone, it was everybody else in the class—because it took us a long time . . . to get it. . . . Because all that was, is new to me, so it took us a long time to—**not I alone,**[1] the other peoples [too] . . . what's "x" and, but, we got it together. . . . I had never heard about "x" and all those things before—it's not just I alone. (Hope, September 1998)

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

In 1997, our research team identified three Adult Basic Education (ABE/ESOL) programs that we assessed to be best practice programs that would enable us to examine the developmental dimensions of transformational learning. Best practice programs are commonly celebrated because they use effective methods for achieving excellent and targeted results, and because such model programs often set benchmarks or standards for other programs to emulate (Hammer & Champy, 1993). In our case, we selected the three programs because each had an established history of practices focused on learner-centered curriculum and pedagogical approaches that appeared to be developmental in nature (see e.g., Harbison & Kegan, 1999). Our aim was to explore, from the learners' perspectives and through our own developmental framework (Kegan, 1982, 1994), how adults experienced learning in these programs that intentionally built in a variety of supports and challenges to facilitate development in one of three social roles: learner, parent, or worker.

In Chapters Four and Five we illustrated how participants at the community college and family literacy sites differently experienced the supports and challenges their respective programs provided, and how the programs themselves served as holding environments for growth. In this chapter, we turn to learners at the Polaroid Corporation site who participated in an adult diploma program created and delivered by the Continuing Education Institute (hereafter, CEI) of Watertown, Massachusetts. Polaroid Corporation contracted with CEI for delivery of adult diploma program classes at Polaroid's Norwood, Massachusetts, plant. Sixteen of the 19 learners who began the CEI program were employees of the Polaroid Corporation, and three were employees of a nearby company who paid for them to attend. Two key research questions guiding our exploration were:

---

[1] We acknowledge Hope for this phrase which we use in this chapter's title. Hope repeatedly used this phrase when referring to her experience in the cohort.

1) What educational practices and processes contribute to changes in learners' relationship to learning and understanding about their roles and responsibilities as learners, parents, and workers?

2) How do learners' ways of understanding shape their experiences of and responses to an educational program dedicated to increasing their role competence?

We explore the first question in this chapter and the second in Chapter Seven.

All learners in this ABE program were working to earn their high school diploma. Importantly, and unlike the other sites discussed in this monograph, CEI's program design calls for the same group of learners to work together over time and within a set timeframe to meet all program requirements for earning a high school diploma. Toward this end, a group of learners attends the same classes together with the same teachers for two hours, two days a week, over a 14-month period. Also, and unlike other ABE programs, learners in the CEI program did not have an open-entry/open-exit option available to them. Instead, these learners were part of a stable group, which engaged in a shared learning experience directed toward accomplishing a common goal. We refer to this group as a cohort.[2] The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (1974) defines a cohort, a term with roots in the ancient Roman military, as: "n 1: a group of warriors or followers; 2: COMPANION, ACCOMPLICE" (p. 148).

As we see it, learners in this program were a cohort not simply because they were taking the same classes at the same time with the same teachers. Learners in this group *became—transformed themselves into*—a cohort. The experience of being a member of this cohort made an important difference of support to these adults' learning. They were indeed partners or warriors engaged in a common learning endeavor, which contributed to their forming a caring learning community, one in which learners supported each other as they participated in this program—*together*. Learners expressed a sense of belonging and a feeling that their fellow cohort members and teachers cared about them and their success. This group of adult workers evolved into a cohort and was, as many of the learners told us, "like a family."

We did not initially set out to examine the influence the cohort might have on participants' program experience, but we came to understand that being part of a cohort mattered importantly, and in *different* ways, to participants at all three sites, and especially to learners in the Polaroid-CEI program. We discovered that for Polaroid learners, membership in this cohort was one of the most critical supports to their learning. Our data show that sustained connection to fellow cohort members made a difference to individual learning in at least three very important ways. The interpersonal relationships that peers developed in the cohort made a critical difference to their *academic learning*, *emotional and psychological well-being*, and ability to *broaden their perspectives*.

This finding highlights implications for both program design and teacher practice. It suggests how ABE teachers might structure classroom environments to better support learners who make sense of their experience in qualitatively different ways. Some ABE teachers occasionally use group learning as a pedagogical approach to building classroom cohesion and/or facilitating learning (Garner, personal communication, January 2001). We also know that some program designers refrain from using the cohorts because of funding requirements (Beder & Medina, 2001), or because of the need for an open-entry/open-exit policy in their particular context, given their participants' needs and life situations (Beth Bingman, November 2000, personal communication). Nevertheless, we suggest that the benefits of building cohorts, or variations of them, into ABE program design have not been fully explored. Thus, this case study provides a compelling example of the academic and nonacademic benefits of cohorts in ABE settings.

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[2] CEI refers to these groups of learners as a "class."

In Polaroid's CEI adult diploma program, cohort members worked in collaborative learning groups in all five of their classes; we will show how this type of group learning among cohort members facilitated academic development and provided psychological support through social interaction. In so doing, we will demonstrate how the adult learners, who were making sense of their experiences through different underlying meaning systems, differently understood their work with cohort members both generally and in collaborative learning groups. We will suggest how the Polaroid cohort—a consistent and enduring community of learners engaged in a shared learning experience over an extended period of time—provided a holding environment that supported the academic development, emotional well-being, and cognitive development[3] of the learners who participated in this 14-month program. The CEI program design features that kept all Polaroid learners studying the same subjects together in the same sequence and at the same times from program start to finish as well as the collaborative learning that infused all classes and the variety of forms of support and challenge offered to and given by these learners worked synergistically to transform this group of individuals into a *cohort of learners* who shared experiences, formed interpersonal relationships, and supported one another's learning.

Many who write about K–12 and university education stress the importance of cooperative and collaborative learning groups to enhance adults' learning experiences and to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills (Bosworth & Hamilton, 1994; Eble & Noonan, 1983; Pedersen & Digby, 1995). Researchers in the field of adult basic education have recently called for direct examination of classroom experiences through the eyes of the adult learners to explore what their experiences mean to them (Comings, Sum, & Uvin, 2000; Gowen, 1992; Quigley, 1993, 1997). Our discussion of the developmentally related effect of the cohort allows us to join and contribute to current conversations in three significant ways, among others that have been highlighted here and in this monograph.

First, Quigley (1997) and Gowen (1992) underscore the need to examine learners' experiences in ABE classrooms and to present learners' voices, which has previously been missing from the literature. Our study offers this "fresh perspective" by focusing on how learners' make sense of their program learning experiences (Quigley, 1997, p. 192). We will later point to important implications of our work for program design and teacher practice. Second, in March 1999, the Task Force on Adult Education developed program standards aimed at creating more effective ABE programs. They recommend instructional activities directed toward "engag[ing] learners in taking an active role in the learning process" and "incorporat[ing] grouping strategies and investigative tasks that facilitate the development of authentic communication skills. Techniques include cooperative learning, information gap, role-play, simulations, problem solving, problem posing" (p. 2). Our study documents the experience of adult learners who participated in a program that included these components. Third, Taylor (1996) highlights the value of using principles of developmental theory to inform and broaden our understanding of adult learners' experiences. She maintains that understanding the qualitatively different ways in which learners make sense of their ABE classroom experiences will strengthen classroom practice and program design. In this chapter, we bring these calls together to illustrate not only that cohorts are important educational and emotional supports for adult learners (i.e., holding environments for growth), but also that those supports are experienced *differently* by learners across a wide range of ways of knowing.

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[3] By academic development we mean theoretical and/or organized, systematic study within the context of the academy. By cognitive development, we are referring to development of the mind—the process of knowing.

Drawing on Robert Kegan's constructive developmental theory (1982, 1994), we will elaborate on previous research and suggest *why* and *how* the use of cohorts in ABE settings and other learning contexts is differentially important to a variety of learners with different ways of knowing and learning. By considering the structure and process of a person's meaning system, Kegan's theory informs our understanding of how adults experience the cohort as a support to their learning. We argue that it is through the lens of their individual meaning-making systems that learners understand their experience in their cohort and their work in collaborative groups. Because each ABE class will likely be populated by adults who make meaning at different developmental positions, ABE programs that recognize learners' developmental diversity—and support these different students' growth accordingly—will be especially effective. The CEI Adult Diploma Program provides an excellent example of this.

The teachers in CEI's program creatively structured their classes so that interaction among adult learners in the cohort helped learners achieve their educational goals. By helping learners make good use of each other, this program was able to provide both the *challenge* that encouraged learners to grow and the *support* they needed to meet those challenges. Such combinations of challenge and support bring into being what Kegan (1982) calls the "holding environment." D. W. Winnicott (1965) originally used this term to talk about the special relationships created to support infancy. Kegan extended this concept throughout the lifespan. He writes:

> This psychosocial environment, or "holding environment," in Winnicott's terms, is the particular form of the world in which a person is, at this moment in his or her evolution, embedded. Since this is the very context in which, and out of which, the person grows, I have come to think of it as a culture of embeddedness. "Culture" here is meant to evoke both an accumulating history and mythology and something grown in a medium in a Petri dish. (1982, p. 116)

Our research highlights that the developmental concept of a holding environment—in Kegan's terms, "the context in which, and out of which, the person grows"—has important implications for ABE teaching and learning practices, as well as for program design. And we assert that the cohort is a dynamic transitional space for growth.

These dynamic holding environments, which attend to *how* learners make sense of their experiences, serve to support and gently challenge learners' development as they grow better able to manage the complexities of their work as learners and in their daily lives. To grow, learners with different ways of knowing will need different forms of support and challenge from their surrounding contexts. Holding environments do not simply provide one form of support and/or challenge; rather, they must be shaped to meet learners *where they are*—in a developmental sense—and to provide appropriate supports and challenges to accommodate the range of ways in which learners are making sense of their experiences.

A good holding environment serves three functions (Kegan 1982, 1994). First, it must "hold well"—meaning that it recognizes and confirms who the person *is* and *how* the person is currently making meaning, without frustration or urgent anticipation of change. Kegan (1982) explains:

> A holding environment must hold-where holding refers not to keeping or confining, but to supporting (even "floating," as in an amniotic environment) the exercises of who the person is. To hold without constraining may be the first requirement of care. (p. 162)

Second, and when a person is ready, a good holding environment needs to "let go," permitting and stimulating a person to move beyond his or her existing understandings to more complex ways of knowing—so that growth is promoted. Third, a good holding environment "sticks around," providing continuity, stability, and availability to the person in the process of growth. This means that whenever possible, the holding environment stays, or remains in place, so relationships can be re-known and reconstructed in a new way—a way that supports who the person has grown to become. While this third feature of a good holding environment may be challenging to provide in shorter-term programs, we believe that any classroom or program can include the other two features, namely high support *and* challenge. Both are essential for good holding. In our view, this learner cohort served as a context for growth that held these adults, each of whom were making sense of their learning experiences in developmentally different ways, by providing them psychological and emotional supports.

This chapter is organized to illustrate three main ways in which the Polaroid cohort served as a holding environment for supporting and challenging learners who made sense of their experience with different ways of knowing (i.e., different underlying meaning systems). We will demonstrate this in three distinct ways with case examples that highlight how adults differentially made sense of the cohort experiences and how, in some cases, adult learners' conceptions of the cohort changed during the 14 months of the program.

First, we will show how the cohort served as a holding environment for growth that was spacious enough to support and challenge adult learners with different ways of knowing in their *academic learning* (i.e., Kegan's 1994 concept of "psychological spaciousness"). We call this the *Learning and Teaching* function of the cohort. Next, we will illuminate the *Encouraging* function of the cohort, explaining how the cohort served as a holding environment for learners by providing a variety of forms of *emotional and psychological support and challenge* to one another. Finally, we will demonstrate that the cohort served as a holding environment for learners by challenging and supporting them as they *broadened their perspectives*; we call this the *Perspective Broadening* function of the cohort. In so doing, we will also discuss how some of the learners' constructions of the cohort changed over time. Additionally, we will point to some possible reasons why two of the adult learners did not make full use of collaborative learning groups initially and how this changed over time. We close this chapter by highlighting implications for building cohorts into ABE programs for teachers, learners, and policymakers.

The following quotations from Polaroid learners[4] illustrate a contrasting set of developmentally different responses that illuminate how learners with different ways of knowing experienced the cohort and group learning. Listen to their voices.

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[4] Bold font is used in learner quotations to highlight the structure of a learner's meaning-making. Also, in accordance with our confidentiality agreements, we have changed all adult learners' and teachers' names to aliases.

> Just hearing somebody talk [in front of the room] me, personally, I start to daydream, you know, and I drift away. But if you're in a group, you can't. You got to listen to everybody. You got to listen, you can't, you got no choice. (***Bill***, Instrumental knower)
>
> So, sometime I get frustrated, especially when I was doing math and sometime I'll be tired. But [the teacher] say, "You say you don't understand, but you can't explain it, but you're getting it right." I said, "Okay, then, since it's **right, I'm not worried**." **But** [a classmate] **was a good encouragement.** She always said, "Hope, don't get so mad with yourself." (***Hope***, Instrumental/Socializing transitional knower)
>
> We share a lot of ideas, especially when we have to work by group. You know, when we work by group of five, all of us learn from each other. And I think that was wonderful, to share, you know, with each other some ideas—different ideas. (***Rita***, Socializing knower)
>
> One teacher and then one student can't do the job. You have to be diverse, a different group, a bunch of people. We learn from each other. We appreciate our work we done, so we appreciate our friendship. You know we've been very respectful too. So we learn to do that, because we're not kids. We are adults, so, we not make fun of people by saying stuff like if they don't know what to say, we polite. So we do appreciate each other. I will miss everybody after the class. (***Christopher***, Socializing/Self-Authoring transitional knower)
>
> [In groups,] it was like, okay, you might get stuck here, on say four and five. [I'd say] "Well, okay, I did. I sit here and look at my paper, well, you did this, how about trying this?" and kindda explain. And then once they [people in his group] finished, we took our papers, and showed it to them, which they came up with the same answers we did. I think it was just the process of helping them, or her, get over that, and made it easier . . . I guess for them and me. . . . Well, like I said, we all have the same problem to work with. And why can I understand it, and you can't understand it. (***Jeff***, Self-Authoring knower)

This chapter explores how the cohort and collaborative learning are experienced differently by learners with different underlying meaning systems and places emphasis on the richness of the cohort as a holding environment that supports and challenges adult learners.

Context: The Literature Relating to Cohorts and Collaborative Learning

The Practice of Using Cohorts: An Historical Review

Although the practice of building educational cohorts in reform programs dates back to the 1940s, their use was restricted, and eventually the approach faded from "mainstream preparation programs by the 1980s" (Basom, Yerkes, Norris, & Barnett, 1996, p. 100). During the period between 1940 and 1980, cohorts had varying degrees of success. Margaret Basom, Diane Yerkes, Cynthia Norris, and Bruce Barnett (1996) report that during this time, "the use of cohorts was positioned within a broader societal context characterized by reactive, authoritarian views of management in which school administrators were the autocratic leaders of schools and school districts" (p. 100). Many educational administration programs included the cohort model in their design as a way to strengthen collegiality among class members and as a tool to help with selecting students into a class. Basom et al., (1996) argue that programs designed with the cohort model were in sharp contrast to the social surroundings of that time and thus declined in number.

However, with societal shifts and changes in the nature of the 21st century educational systems, the practice of using cohorts is re-emerging in university graduate programs (Barnett & Muse, 1993; Basom et al., 1996; Hill, 1995; Teitel, 1997). For example, Basom et al., (1996) found that colleges and universities are adopting the practice of using cohorts as a "fashionable delivery structure for preparation programs" (p. 99). In considering educational administration graduate programs, many students choose programs that offer the support of membership in a cohort because they prefer to work collaboratively (Basom et al., 1996; Hill, 1995). In this context, groups set common goals, determine criteria for the activities they will engage in to achieve their goals, and establish their own criteria for assessing their success (Barnett & Muse, 1993; Basom et al., 1996; Hill, 1995).

In discussing reasons why educational leadership programs across the country are resurrecting the use of cohorts, Marie Somers Hill (1995) argues that the practice of cohorts helps educational leaders develop the skills they will need to work successfully in our changing and complex society. Hill (1995) writes,

> To facilitate collaboration and networking, educational leadership graduate programs in many settings are deliberately organizing students into teams or cohorts that remain together through most or all of their program of study. (p. 179)

Like the cohorts that are re-emerging in colleges and universities, the members of the Polaroid cohort worked together over an extended period of time, shared a common goal, and engaged in collaborative learning groups. Although the Polaroid cohort shares many features of the current design of university cohorts, there are important differences.

Learners in the Polaroid cohort were not preparing to be educational leaders, nor were they required to create their own criteria for assessing their success in the program. Also, Polaroid learners were assessed by program teachers as individuals, rather than as a group. Despite these differences, there are important similarities between the practice of using cohorts in universities and the model used with the Polaroid CEI cohort. For example, researchers have found that university students who have membership in cohorts named the greatest benefit to be "increased feelings of support and belonging gathered from close ties with other students" (Hill, 1995, p. 181). This was also a benefit members of the Polaroid cohort named. In this chapter we will illuminate how these learners *made sense of* the variety of forms of emotional and psychological support and challenge—as well as the academic forms of support and challenge—the cohort provided. In so doing, we illustrate how the cohort served as a holding environment for growth.

Collaborative Learning: A Review of the Literature

Over the past three decades, researchers have explored the increasing role and benefits of collaborative learning in higher education and K–12 contexts (Bosworth & Hamilton, 1994; Eble & Noonan, 1983; Pedersen & Digby, 1995). We have recognized that learning is a constructive process and that students need opportunities "to formulate questions and insights as they occur and to test them in conversation with others" (Elbe & Noonan, 1983, p. 73). Bosworth and Hamilton (1994), in *Collaborative Learning: Underlying Processes and Effective Techniques*, maintain that, "In its self-authorized forms, social interaction has long been a part of traditional college education, particularly in medicine and the lab sciences" (p. 1). The interaction among colleagues who work together in learning groups not only serves a social function, but the process of conversation and activity among group members promotes active learning (Elbe & Noonan, 1983). While some teachers rely on the information-transmitting lecture form of educating learners of all ages, many are incorporating collaborative learning experiences into their everyday pedagogical practices with greater frequency. Educational researchers suggest,

> Changing demographics, the information explosion, and increasingly well-articulated theories of optimal learning conditions are transforming how we look at teaching in our colleges and universities. Collaborative learning is increasingly acknowledged as an effective way of engaging students with discipline-specific language and concepts, acquainting them with the social responsibilities of learning and the intellectual benefits of shared explorations for meaning, and retaining them by improving their performance and enjoyment of learning. (Bosworth & Hamilton, 1994, p. 1)

Jeanne Gerlach (1994) defines collaborative learning as "an umbrella term that encompasses multiple educational strategies and approaches involving both the teacher and the students in a joint intellectual effort. . . . They all center on the students' processes of investigation, discovery, and application, not on the teacher's presentation of the material" (p. 10, from Smith & MacGregor, 1992). Gerlach's definition of collaborative learning marks an important shift from Elbe and Noonan's 1983 conception of cooperative group learning, which was defined by two central characteristics: 1) "a process of group conversation and activity that promotes active learning," and 2) " a way for faculty to guide this learning process and to offer their expertise by structuring tasks or activities" (p. 2). In a lecture-transmission instructional paradigm, the instructor is clearly "the locus of knowledge and authority" (Flannery, 1994, p. 16). Similarly, Flannery (1994) maintains that cooperative learning is merely "the use of student learning groups to support an instructional system that maintains the traditional lines of classroom knowledge and authority…" (pp. 17-18). Flannery argues that a collaborative learning context, by contrast, is one in which "at least some aspects of classroom knowledge and authority can be developed or created by both students and teacher" (p. 18). A social component and an orientation to generating—not just absorbing—knowledge distinguish collaborative learning.

Sharon Hamilton (1994) presents a model for developing proficiency with collaborative learning methods. Her approach, which she offers as a developmental model, is based on her research in university settings with college-age students. According to Hamilton's model, the five stages of developing proficiency with collaborative learning are: 1) "learning rules, techniques and strategies, 2) applying what you have learned, 3) developing competence, 4) becoming proficient, and 5) becoming an expert" (p. 97). This general model of developing proficiency suggests that these are stages that all learners move through as they become skilled at using collaborative learning strategies. Although Hamilton's model is helpful in the sense that it illuminates key processes that may be inherent in collaborative learning, we wonder about the kinds of developmental demands such processes might place upon learners who make sense of their experiences with different underlying meaning systems.

Furthermore, Hamilton (1994) provides helpful suggestions to teachers who wish to construct collaborative learning environments to enhance academic learning. To frame her inquiry, she describes three distinct models identified by John Trimbur (1993) and relates them to the characteristics, practices, and beliefs about collaborative learning she has observed within the field of higher education over the past decade. In so doing, she discusses how these three models can be applied to classrooms and recommends that teachers adopt one particular model that aligns with their teaching philosophy or personal style.

Each model has its own goals and suggested processes. The first, the "postindustrialist model" (Trimbur, 1993) of collaborative learning, "appears in classrooms in the form of group efforts to solve common problems formulated by an instructor whose curricular agenda determines group structure, time on task, goals, and anticipated answers" (Hamilton, 1994, p. 94). The second, the "social constructionist model," consists of "engaging students more actively in their learning while concurrently developing social skills of negotiation and consensus building" (p. 95). Finally, the third is the "popular democratic model" of collaborative development, in which the challenge for learners is "not to obliterate essential differences in the search for commonalties but rather to envision these essential differences . . . as catalysts for the making of meaning within specific concepts of the particular course" (pp. 95–96). Not only do these models have different goals, but each assigns different types and levels of responsibility to teachers and learners. Each model also recommends different principles for designing classroom environments and offers alternative ways to structure authority.

How might learners who make sense of their experience with different underlying meaning systems experience each of these models? What types of developmental supports and challenges might be necessary for learners to engage in any one of these models? How might learners benefit if teachers were to incorporate aspects of all three of these different models into their classrooms? How might ABE teachers who include collaborative learning in their classroom practices benefit from understanding the different developmental places adults in these groups are coming from?

In the CEI Adult Diploma Program, we observed how cohort members engaged in collaborative learning groups in all five of their academic classes in which classroom knowledge and authority were developed and shared by both the adult learners and the teachers. In this chapter, we will show how adult learners with different ways of knowing experienced the cohort and collaborative group learning. To set a context for this exploration, we will first present a brief discussion of how workers applied to this CEI Adult Diploma Program and some of the features of the CEI program design and its curriculum. The implications of our work for ABE program design and teaching practices will be examined in the final section.

The Process of Making an Application to the CEI Adult Diploma Program

Shop floor workers who had lower-level literacy skills or who lacked "core skills," we were told, were two groups of learners who could apply for admission into the CEI Adult Diploma Program. Another (smaller) group of workers who for various reasons did not complete or start their high school education could also apply. Some learners told us they approached their supervisors and requested support for their applications to the program, while others were encouraged to apply by their supervisors. Regardless of whether a worker was approached by a supervisor or initiated the process, the supervisor's recommendation, stating that a worker was a good candidate for the program, was required. All interested workers were then invited to attend one of two "open houses," hosted jointly by CEI and Polaroid, to become familiar with program requirements. In October 1997, members of our research team attended one of these mid-afternoon open houses at Polaroid's Waltham, Massachusetts, plant and learned about the program, its classes, and its philosophy. The second open house was held at Polaroid's Norwood, Massachusetts plant. Workers from both of these plants eventually enrolled in the 1998–1999 diploma program.

If, after attending an open house, a worker was interested in enrolling in the program and received a supervisor's (and, therefore, Polaroid's) endorsement, the worker then took certain assessment tests administered by CEI. This assessment included testing for reading, writing, and math skill levels. All workers needed "at least a sixth-grade reading level" to be considered for the diploma program, Dr. Lloyd David, the executive director and founder of CEI, told us. If a worker does not have the appropriate level of literacy skills for entry, the person is offered support to enhance skills before being invited to reapply for participation in the program at another time. Polaroid offers an array of courses in writing, study skills, and mathematics to help workers develop skills. For example, Polaroid has an introductory math course, "Math Readiness," designed to build basic math skills and lay a foundation for future math courses.

The Continuing Education Institute's Adult Diploma Program

In January 1999, CEI's program was recognized in Vice President Al Gore's summit on "21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs." This summit focused on the importance of "upgrading knowledge and skills in the workplace." Dr. David told us that CEI's program was recognized as having "one of 20 model programs throughout the country selected as an exemplar of 'best practices' in workplace training and education." Specifically, CEI's model for "educating workers in 10 manufacturing companies in Massachusetts" was acknowledged and celebrated as a model for other states at this summit.

We selected the Polaroid Corporation as our site and believed that CEI's adult diploma program was a best practice program (see e.g., Harbison & Kegan, 1999, for a developmental assessment of best practice programs). After meeting with CEI professionals and reviewing CEI's program design and curriculum, we decided that this program met our selection criteria. In other words, it was a longer-term program (14 months), its approach to educating adult learners and curricula appeared to be developmental in orientation, and it provided multiple forms of support and challenge to adult learners (e.g., teachers, tutors, program staff, curricula design, and program structure). Also, the program's structure and curricula appeared to create a powerful learning environment for learners.

Michael Hammer and James Champy (1993) discuss how modern-day organizations that have best practices use "benchmarking" as a tool. They write:

> Essentially, benchmarking means looking for the companies that are doing something best and learning how they do it in order to emulate them. (p. 132)

In their extensive review and analysis of best practice approaches in professional organizations, Anne Harbison and Robert Kegan (1999) discuss the process of benchmarking within the context of transformational learning. They explain,

> Benchmarking within the context of transformational learning denotes an *outward focus of attention and curiosity*, rather than a competitive, zero-sum accounting of narrowly defined "wins" and "losses" or "market advantage." For program planners and administrators, there is much to be gained through generous collaboration regarding program innovation, successes, and new insights (Cranton, 1996; Brody & Wallace, 1994; Vella, 1995, 1998). (p. 26)

Not only did we believe this site would be one at which we could deeply examine adults' learning experience in an ABE program, we also believed it was one from which other program designers and practitioners could learn and gain new insights.

One of our research purposes was to understand how educational practices and processes might support changes in learners' relationship to their learning—and way of knowing. Specifically, we sought to examine how adult learners in the selected program research sites might undergo transformational learning while participating in these programs. We adhere to Kegan's (1994) definition of transformational learning:

> An *in*formational stance leaves the form [of a person's way of knowing] as it is and focuses on changing what people know; it is essentially a *training* model for personal change. I would contrast this with a *trans*formational stance, which places the form itself at risk for change and focuses on changes in how people know; it is essentially an *educational* model for personal change. The word education is built out of the Latin prefix *ex* plus the verb *ducere* ("to lead") and suggests a "leading out from." While *training* increases the fund of knowledge, *education*, leads us out of or liberates us from one construction or organization of mind [i.e., a way of knowing] in favor of a larger one. (p. 163–164)

In this chapter, we will explore how learners experienced both informational and transformational learning in the context of the cohort and collaborative learning groups in this program.

CEI's Adult Diploma Program Design

Since 1982, CEI has been offering its adult diploma program to adults who are at least 20 years old and who have not graduated from high school. Adult learners earn their diplomas from Cathedral High School, an accredited private high school in Boston. Classes meet two or three afternoons each week in a convenient location for a period of 10 to 15 months. Most of CEI's teachers have been or continue to be

K–12 educators. The Polaroid adult diploma program classes were held at the Norwood plant for two hours each of the two weekdays (Tuesday and Thursday) from March 1998 through June 1999. CEI envisions both immediate and personal/long-range benefits of this program (see Table 1).

Table 1: CEI's Adult Diploma Program's Immediate and Long-range Benefits

IMMEDIATE BENEFITS	PERSONAL & LONG-RANGE BENEFITS
Improve reading, writing, and math skills	Increase confidence
Open doors for higher education/college	Enhance productivity on the job
Improve communication skills	Expand opportunities for promotion
Improve study and organizational skills	Improve leadership abilities

In addition to providing classes, the CEI program offers learners tutorial and counseling services. Tutors are available to students after and sometimes before classes to provide additional assistance in learning. In a 1992 survey of 212 CEI program graduates, "32 percent had continued with their education, 49 percent had changed jobs, and 60 percent had increased responsibility at work" (CEI Program materials, 1997, p. 1). This survey also indicated positive changes in participants' skills and career opportunities six months after of completing the program.

CEI's Adult Diploma Program Curriculum

All adults enrolled in CEI's Adult Diploma program take five classes: Mathematics, Writing/English, U.S. History, Science, and Life Employment Workshop. The Life Employment Workshop is a course that focuses on career exploration. In the

1998–99 diploma program, John taught math and Margaret taught Writing/English during the first trimester. John taught Science and Kirk taught U.S. History in the second trimester. Judith taught the Life Employment Workshop in the final trimester. Many program classes focus on writing and development of research skills, and the writing classes have a specific focus on work-related issues.

CEI curricula—and every course in the program—emphasize what CEI refers to as their "pervasive standards" (Lloyd David, December 2000, personal communication), which are closely aligned with what our colleagues at Equipped for the Future refer to as "EFF Standards" (Stein, 2000). Sondra Stein (2000) discusses EFF's standards in this way:

> The 16 Equipped for the Future Standards define the core knowledge and skills adults need to effectively carry out their roles as parents, citizens, and workers. The Standards have been identified through research on what adults need to do to meet broad areas of responsibility that define these roles as adults. (p. 17)

Dr. David acknowledges the critical influence of EFF's research on his own thinking about how the CEI program can better support the acquisition and development of skills that adults need to meet their responsibilities as workers and learners. Communication, problem solving, presentation, and computer skills are a few of the pervasive standards that infuse the CEI curriculum and program design. Each course emphasizes these standards as well as reading, writing, and critical thinking skills (CEI program materials, 1997, p.1). For example, in the Writing/ English course, students develop writing skills by engaging in various individual and group exercises in which they have opportunities that help them learn and practice: brainstorming, creating cluster diagrams, and developing a point of view. Students learn to improve their reading strategies by developing skills in generating questions, distinguishing between fact and opinion, making a storyline, and summarizing. In this course, students also enhance their critical thinking strategies by improving their skills in analyzing, classifying, evaluating texts, interpreting, and synthesizing.

CEI customizes the curriculum in accordance with participants' needs at their individual workplace (CEI Program materials, 1992, 1997). In the Life Employment Workshop class, in addition to engaging in the Life Stories exercise (to be discussed later in this chapter), students investigate such questions as "Who am I? Where am I? and Where am I going?" (CEI program materials, 1997, p. 2). Learners are also scaffolded through the processes of learning how to make job applications, construct resumes, and write a college entrance essay. This workshop aims to give learners an opportunity to learn new skills and to use and develop their skills.

Significantly, CEI classes and the program curricula are oriented toward reinforcing "teamwork concepts" (CEI Program materials, 1992, p. 4). All classes use collaborative group learning structures to facilitate and enhance adult learning. These structures, as well as other aspects of the CEI program design discussed previously, seem to reinforce teamwork and various forms of adult collaboration. In math classes, for example, we observed that adult learners often worked in groups of four or five to collaboratively solve mathematical problems. In Writing/English class, learners regularly worked in small groups to draft essays and then shared these with the entire class, which provided an opportunity to receive constructive feedback from teachers and colleagues. At other times—when working on their science reports, for example—learners worked in pairs to develop ideas, search the Internet for information, or critique each other's work. The CEI program and its inherent structure seem to reinforce the importance of the skills put forth and celebrated in Polaroid's Competency Development "Star Model" (to be discussed in the Chapter Seven). In our view, this program offers supports and challenges to learners as they work to develop these skills.

The 1998–99 Adult Diploma Program Cohort

In February 1998, before the CEI Program officially started, we met the courageous, motivated, and somewhat apprehensive adult learners who would eventually form a cohesive and closely bonded cohort, or as many of the adults came to refer to it, a "family." When we began our study, 19 adults had passed the CEI entry assessments in math, writing, and reading and been accepted into the diploma program. Sixteen of these learners, for a variety of reasons, had not attended high school in their native countries, one had earned a college degree in his home country, and two had dropped out of high school in the United States. Several learners had gained experience as adults in skill-oriented workshops or trimester-long classes (e.g., learning English as a Second Language or in multi-day workplace training programs). However, for many of the learners, this was their first experience in a formal classroom setting since elementary school.

Sixteen of these adults were employees of the Polaroid Corporation, and three worked at another nearby manufacturing company. However, before the second trimester began (September 1998) one Polaroid employee and two employees from the other company had dropped out of the program.[5] Sixteen adults (eight women and eight men) completed the 14-month program and received their high school diplomas. We introduce the learners who completed the program in Table 2. We use the symbol, "Δ" to signify a change in a participant's underlying meaning system from program start to finish; where no "Δ" symbol appears, our assessments did not indicate this kind of change.

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[5] We were only able to interview one of the three adults who did not complete the program. This employee, from the nearby company from which three adults initially enrolled, told us he needed to leave the program because he no longer had transportation from his workplace to the Polaroid site where the classes took place.

Table 2: Polaroid Learners' Descriptive Characteristics and Developmental Assessments

Name	Gender/Age at Start of Program	Region of Origin[6]	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learner
Bill	Male Late 40s	United States	Instrumental 2 to 2(3) Δ	Bill, born in the U.S., dropped out of school after the eighth grade. He later joined the military, where he felt he learned a lot about life. Bill was married and the father of four children ranging from preteen to teenagers. He and his wife both worked and shared childcare responsibilities. Bill enjoyed talking with other learners and felt that talking helped him learn. He struggled to find the time to do his homework while balancing his other responsibilities as worker, parent, and spouse.
Renada	Female N/A	West Africa	Instrumental 2 to 2(3) Δ	Renada had lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years. She and several members of her family of origin lived in the MA area. At home with her family, Renada spoke Creole/Portuguese. Renada was finalizing her divorce. She was the mother of two children in their mid-20s and one teenager. Renada wanted to earn an American high school diploma and improve her English.
Sal	Male Early 30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 to 3/2 Δ	Sal was married, and he and his wife worked. He was the father of an elementary school-age child. He, his many siblings, and parents lived in the same town. His first language was Portuguese. Sal wanted to earn his high school diploma and increase his chances for promotions.
Hope	Female Late 50s	Caribbean	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 to 3/2 Δ	Hope was the oldest learner in our sample. She had lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years, was married, and had two adult children. When she first arrived from the Caribbean, she took the GED exam but did not pass all of the sections. She was eager to earn her high school diploma. Hope was the class speaker at graduation.

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[6] All of the learners who are from West Africa are from the same home country. Pierre and Christopher, who are from the Caribbean, are also from the same country. Hope is from another Caribbean country.

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	Gender/Age at Start of Program	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learner
Teresina	Female Late 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 – 2/3	Teresina had lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years and had a high school diploma from her home country. Before this program, she attended high school in MA for two years but needed to stop because she and her husband shared childcare responsibilities. Her first language was Creole. She had two toddlers. A coworker encouraged her to apply to this program, and she was eager to earn her American diploma and improve her English.
Angelina	Female Mid-30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Angelina had lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years and was married (her husband also worked). She was the mother of two elementary school-age children and one teenager. Angelina wanted to earn her American high school diploma and was also eager to improve her expressive English so she could be a better team member at Polaroid and could help her children with their homework.
Helena	Female Late 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Helena had lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years. She completed the eighth grade in her home country and regretted that she was not able to continue her schooling there. She had a high value for education and encouraged her children to attend college. Helena was recently divorced. She had family in the [illegible]ston area who were sources of encouragement. Helena spoke Portuguese and Creole at home. Helena wanted to earn her high school diploma and improve her English.
Veronica	Female Early 30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Veronica had lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years. When she first arrived, she began working and going to school; however, she stopped going to school when she married her husband. She was the mother of a preteen and teenager. Veronica enrolled in this program so she could help her children with their homework, develop better skills for work, and improve her English. She lived very close to several members of her family of origin.

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	Gender/Age at Start of Program	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learner
Rita	Female Early 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition to Socializing 3/2 to 3 Δ	Rita had lived in the U.S. for more than 20 years. At home, she spoke Portuguese/Creole with her husband and two children (one preteen and one teenager). In her home country, she was not able to go to school after elementary school because she needed to work to support her family. Rita was eager to earn her American high school diploma and believed it would help her learn skills needed for work and improve her English. During the program's second trimester, Rita was laid off, but she was able to complete the program.
Pierre	Male Late 40s	Caribbean	Socializing 3 – 3	Pierre had lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years. He was divorced and had five children. Pierre's long-term hopes included helping children in this country learn French and Creole (the languages he spoke at home in addition to English) and returning to his home country to teach children. In addition to wanting to earn an American high school diploma, Pierre wanted to improve his English.
Toungh	Male Late 20s	Asia	Socializing 3 – 3	Toungh had lived in the U.S. for two years and had a degree in architecture from his home country. He worked a nearby company and was not married. Toungh's parents lived in his home country in Asia. He had one sister who also lived in MA. Toungh was mainly interested in improving his English and felt the math and science courses in the program were easy.
Christopher	Male Late 30s	Caribbean	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition [3/4 – 3/4]	Christopher had been living in the U.S. for 10 years. He lived with a family member whom he cared for after work. Earning an American high school diploma was, for him, a key to survival and to moving ahead in life. He enjoyed learning with cohort members because they were polite and respectful of each other. Christopher had never been married and was the father of a teenager and an infant.

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	**Gender/Age at Start of Program**	**Region of Origin**	**Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish**	**Descriptive Characteristics of Learner**
Paulo	Male Early 40s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3(4) to 3/4 Δ	Paulo had lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years and had worked for all of those years at Polaroid. He enrolled in the program "to have a better future," to have more knowledge, to be a better worker, and to help his family. He wanted to earn an American high school diploma and improve his English. Paulo spoke three other languages in addition to English: Portuguese, Creole, and Spanish. He was married and the father of two college-age children.
Daniel	Male Early 50s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3/4 to 4/3 Δ	Daniel had lived in the U.S. for more than 20 years. He thought that this program would help him improve his skills at work and his English. He was married and the father of two adult children (in their early 20s) and foster father to two preschool children. Daniel spoke Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish in addition to English.
Magda	Female Early 50s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3/4 to 4/3 Δ	Magda had lived in the U.S. for more than 25 years. She was married and had four children ranging in age from late teens to mid-20s. She made the decision to wait to earn her high school diploma until after her children completed elementary school. Magda thought that earning a diploma would help her to develop skills needed for work and also help improve her English. It was also a step toward her own goals for lifelong learning.
Jeff	Male Late 40s	United States	Self-Authoring 4 – 4	Jeff was originally from the South and moved to the north when he was a teenager. He dropped out of high school in the 11th grade, and his previous learning experiences in high school were not positive. He was very happy to be in the CEI program. For a long time, he had a goal to earn his high school diploma. Jeff spoke English at home. He was divorced and had two adult children.

In 1998–1999 the Polaroid Corporation contracted with CEI to deliver the CEI Adult Diploma Program classes for a third year. The program was set to begin in January 1998, but layoffs at Polaroid and their unsettling effects on employee morale and the company in general led Polaroid to postpone the program's start until late March 1998. Polaroid's workplace education manager, Steve Williams, told us that Polaroid's executives and managers believed workers were now in need of a high school education to be better prepared to manage the demands of the modern workplace (we discuss the demands of the 21st century workplace in Chapter Seven). The majority of the Polaroid adult learners enrolled in the program were hired in the 1970s without high school diplomas. The Polaroid Corporation invested $5,000 for each worker to enroll in the diploma program, even for the two adults who were eventually laid off during the program.

The adult learners in the 1998–99 cohort held a variety of positions at Polaroid, ranging from working in the mailroom to designing filters for car and airplane windows to making film and checking it for defects (this is discussed in Chapter Seven). The average age of these learners was 42 years, and the range in age was from 27 to 58 years old. The great majority of these learners had children and most were married. Participants in this cohort were, for the most part, older than participants at our other two sites and had lived in the United States for a longer period than participants at our other two research sites. These adults had lived in the United States for an average of 22 years, with the exception of Toungh, an adult learner from the nearby manufacturing company, who had only been here two years when he began the program. Like participants at the other two sites, this cohort had ethnic and racial backgrounds that made them a diverse and multicultural group. Two learners were born in the United States, 10 in the same home country in West Africa, three in the Carribbean, and one in Asia. Only two of the learners (those born in the United States) spoke English as their first language. Although Toungh had earned a college degree in his home country of Vietnam, the other adults in the class had, on average, attended school for only nine and one half years before enrolling in the CEI Adult Diploma Program. More than 80 percent of the adult learners were parents of school-age or college-age children. On average, their mothers had about four years of schooling, and their fathers had about seven and one half years in their home countries.[7]

The majority of these adults had lived in the United States since the mid-1970s. In program classes, we observed that many learners spoke with tremendous pride as they shared heart-warming stories of their arrival to the United States. Their eyes filled with tears as they talked about the courage it took for them to leave their home countries and families of origin to begin a "new life" here, in what they referred to as "the land of opportunity." Though their reasons for coming to the United States varied and their experiences since arriving were quite diverse, their shared goal of earning a high school diploma brought them together to form this learning cohort and "family." We will now explore the three main ways the Polaroid cohort served as a holding environment for learners with different underlying meaning systems.

SECTION II: "EVERYBODY THINKS DIFFERENTLY": THE COHORT AS A HOLDING ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

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[7] Please see Appendix A for a full description of this sample's demographics.

> Yeah, sometimes when we worked in a group, that helps, because you may find out good idea from another student that you may need to write it down in your piece of a writing, or whatever you're doing. (***Sal***, 1998)

Although the great majority of the Polaroid learners valued the opportunity to work with colleagues in pairs, small groups (four to five people), and/or large groups (the whole class), they made sense of these experiences *differently*. In this section, we will present one case representative of each way of knowing to illustrate the qualitative distinctions in how learners understood the learner cohort and their collaborative work with fellow cohort members (see Table 3). Our intention is to illuminate how these adults experienced the cohort as a safe holding environment that supported their academic learning and efforts in this program. Where appropriate, we will point to how some learners' meaning making of these collaborative experiences changed—grew more complex—during the 14-month program.

Table 3: Selected Learner Cases for Illustrating the Cohort as a Holding Environment for Learning & Teaching

Name	Gender/Age at Program's Start	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish
Bill	Male/Late 40s	United States	Instrumental [2 to 2(3)] Δ
Hope	Female/Late 50s	Caribbean	Instrumental/Socializing Transition [2/3 to 3/2] Δ
Pierre	Male/Late 40s	Caribbean	Socializing [3]
Paulo	Male/Early 50s	West Africa	Socializing/Self-Authoring Transition [3(4) to 3/4] Δ
Jeff	Male/Late 40s	United States	Self-Authoring [4]

The Instrumental Way of Knowing

In this section, we present excerpts from the interviews we conducted with an adult learner who constructed his experience with an Instrumental way of knowing. Bill was one of two cohort learners who made sense of his experience at the fully Instrumental meaning-making stage (i.e., stage 2)[8] at program start. At program completion, he grew to demonstrate the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing.

Bill's Case

> You know, one-one-one is kind of blah, blah, blah, but when you get in the groups it was a little more helpful, I think. (September, 1998)

Bill was a gregarious, American-born, married man in his late 40s who was the father of four children who were preteens and teenagers. He worked in the film department at Polaroid. One of the two native English speakers in the CEI Adult Diploma Program cohort, Bill dropped out of school after completing eighth grade. After leaving school, Bill told us that he "bumped around between jobs" and was "fired from most of them." Bill then decided to serve in the U.S. Marines, which he felt taught him much about life.

Bill thought of himself as a learner who "learns by talking" and repeatedly told us that although he was able to complete his assignments when he worked at school, he had "a hard time concentrating" on his homework when he was at home. Although Bill's previous experiences in school had not been positive, he was highly motivated to earn his diploma. He spoke softly as he said that his oldest son "dropped out of the 11th grade" and that part of his motivation to complete the program was to be a "good role model" for his children.

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[8] Renada, another learner, demonstrated a fully and solely Instrumental way of knowing at the program's start and grew to demonstrate the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing at the program completion.

In April 1998, before beginning the CEI Adult Diploma Program, Bill stated that the best way for him to learn was "on the job." At this point, he equated learning with doing. Before entering the program, when Bill needed to learn something new at work, he said he would most often remember it after hearing it "once or twice." If that did not work for him, he would write it down so he had a better chance of getting it "locked in." Although he expressed regret about not earning his high school diploma earlier, he expressed confidence about his ability to learn in this program. He felt that "anything I really put my mind to," he eventually would be able to learn; "It ain't nothing I can't accomplish." Before entering the program, Bill recounted stories of learning on his own, "on the job."

At work, Bill learned mainly by himself, in isolation. After gaining experience in collaborative work during his first trimester in the diploma program (September 1998), however, Bill began to discuss a new and powerful way for him to learn. When asked what has been most helpful or satisfying about his classes in the CEI Adult Diploma Program, he happily shared:

> I think when we had group sessions, you know? And we could talk about, you know—even in math and writing, you know. **We'd get together, and we'd all talk about [ideas]. . . . It was more thoughtful a process of him** [the math teacher] and everybody else's ideas, then saying what your ideas were. You know, one-one-one is kind of blah, blah, blah, but when you get in the groups it was a little more helpful, I think. As far as writing, even math. Math we had some fun. (PI #2, p. 12–13)

In Bill's view, working with smaller groups (four or five) of his cohort classmates helped him to learn mathematical concepts and improve his writing because he was able to talk and share his ideas. Sharing his thinking and asking questions helped Bill clarify his own ideas, learn about other people's ideas, and get answers.

For Bill, learning independently or solely by listening to the teacher proved challenging. He relayed stories about how he learned better by having concepts "explained" to him, as opposed to merely reading about them "in books." He said it was difficult for him to focus when the teacher presented ideas on the blackboard. In contrast, learning in smaller groups helped the learning to "stick" for Bill. Being in a group allowed him to focus on what others were saying; their ideas helped him reflect on and express his own thinking. Another way of understanding Bill's preference for group work is related to the way he said he learned. For Bill, knowing comes from doing:

> I don't like reading in books, but if you get explained to you [it's better]. And then you do a few [math problems] on the paper—you know, scratch it [mistakes] out, you know, without official forms, and then talk about it [in small group with peers]. . . . **It's [the learnings] tend to sticks with me more.** And the ideas or thoughts. But staring at the blackboard, your mind tends to wander, you start thinking about, "Geez, four o'clock, another half hour, geez, where I gotta go. I gotta do this. I hope they [the teachers] call a break. I gotta, I want a drink of water." (PI #2, p. 27)

Bill oriented almost exclusively to the concrete outcomes of and hopes for his learning (demonstrating an Instrumental way of knowing).

Working with other classmates in a small group seemed to facilitate Bill's learning in another way—it almost forced him to give attention to the speaker in the group. He had a concrete orientation to working in groups—group work *made* him pay attention. On the other hand, Bill stated that when someone talked in front of the room outside of a group context, he was more inclined to "daydream" and "drift away."

> Just hearing somebody talk [in front of the room] me, personally, I start to daydream, you know, and I drift away. But if you're in a group, you can't. You got to listen to everybody. You got to listen, you can't, you got no choice. I don't like reading in books. (PI #2, p. 26–27)

He did not like to do things alone that required him to focus inwardly. He preferred his attention to be outwardly directed, and he liked to be "talking."

While learners making meaning at a variety of ways of knowing might have a preference for group learning instead of individual learning, the *ways* Bill made meaning in group learning was through his Instrumental way of knowing. Adults with this meaning-making system have clear knowledge of their enduring traits—in Bill's case, it was clear to him that book learning was not his preferred way of acquiring information. He described this orientation as *external* to him, and therefore the solutions to this learning problem were also external. When people present information in ways not helpful to him, his "mind tends to wander," or he drifts away. Similarly, working in a group was effective for him for other external reasons. He felt he had "to listen to everybody" and stated he had "no choice" other than to learn when he was in a group.

By September 1998, Bill realized that being in a group was also an opportunity to get outside validation about his thinking from peers in his cohort. He seemed to rely on this kind of validation to feel more secure about his learning. He enjoyed having the opportunity to talk when working in smaller groups and when working with the full cohort in large-group discussion. In his view, his classmates, "let me do most of the talking." Bill told us he experienced "standing up" and "talking" in small group or in front of the entire cohort as supportive to his learning. It seems that "doing most of the talking" may have been a way for Bill to feel more competent relative to his peers—most of whom speak English as a second language. Bill described himself as more competent at "doing school" when he was in the class doing group work.

> Groups is it. I mean you could . . . in a group, most of the people I'm in a group with, you know, they don't speak too good English. So, they let me do most of the talking. (PI #2, p. 20)

Bill appeared to thrive in this environment, where he was invited to share his ideas verbally with group members and with the full class.

Working with cohort members in a small group served another equally important function for Bill: It provided him opportunities to learn how to correct his mistakes.

> If you made [a mistake or], you ain't saying the **right thing, or was not telling the right story**, somebody [in the group] will say to you, **"Oh, I don't think that's right."** And we'll [the group], we'll discuss it. You know, one-on-one-on-one, somebody will just, you know, you get to talking, somebody one-on-one, they might just let you say anything you want, and just let it blow over, you know? But out of four [people in a group], somebody's gonna say, "Well, wait a minute—didn't we mean this?" (PI #2, p. 22)

We see how working with cohort members was generally supportive to Bill. We also see that he constructed knowledge as being right or wrong. Bill was not yet able to see a larger purpose of the group's self-created learning. As an Instrumental knower, he did not yet conceptualize knowledge as having multiple right answers to questions. Instead, knowledge was external to him, something that others have that Bill could acquire from them. He had a desire to improve and wanted to know the right answers and the correct way to get those answers. Bill told us that working in a group was more helpful than working one-on-one because he had a better chance of learning the right answers. Group members also helped him correct his mistakes. Collaborating with fellow cohort members served a practical and functional purpose; he used group learning as an opportunity to get answers, improve his skills, talk about his questions, and encourage others to speak. Bill demonstrates the strength of the Instrumental way of knowing—he talked about the concrete outcomes and tangible benefits he derived from working collaboratively with cohort members.

Immediately before graduation from the diploma program in June 1999, Bill told us the best parts of the program were when he "got to talk" with others for learning purposes and work with peers in small groups. In Bill's view, working in groups generated opportunities for him to voice his ideas, learn from listening to other people's ideas, gain validation, and work out questions in the company of peers. When we asked Bill in June 1999, "What do you think helps you the most when you're learning?" he responded,

> Class participation, talking. I gotta talk. I can sit in a class all day long, and talk, talk, talk about things and change subjects, and go on to the next thing. But to put it down on paper, I get a mental block. Here [in small groups] **I can do it, I sat here and wrote 10 pages of my essay.** Sitting in class while somebody else talking, I'd be writing. And I wrote 10 pages of my own essay. I go home, I'd have two weeks, like over Christmas vacation, or whatever, I couldn't, I didn't put a word down on paper, I just can't, I say, I did it at the beginning, we went to the library a few times, and I did a little research, I wrote my book reports, at the library, but I couldn't get just nothing on paper, I just get this mental block. As I said, I wrote 10 pages. Here I can't get nothing. (PI #4, p.8)

For Bill, in addition to working with teachers (to be discussed in the next chapter), working with classmates in the cohort was the most helpful feature of the diploma program. This kind of learning seemed to allow Bill to discover, through speaking, what he believed and thought. Having the chance to articulate his thinking in the company of others appeared to help him come to new awareness and discoveries about what he and other people thought. Also, having the opportunity to share his questions and entertain alternative points of view or solutions helped him obtain the answers and solutions he needed to complete his assignments. Working with others enhanced Bill's chances of getting the right answers and learning the correct methods for solving math problems and correcting his grammar when writing assignments for his classes. Bill did not, however, orient to the internal emotional or psychological aspects of his experience. Instead, he understood and articulated his success concretely.

In Bill's meaning-making system, the Instrumental way of knowing, the cohort groups served a functional, utilitarian purpose: They were useful in helping him to meet his own specific concrete needs and behavioral goals. Other adults supported Bill by helping him obtain the needed outcomes for success in the program (i.e., right answers, right skills, and facts). He and other learners with this way of knowing valued the cohort and collaborative learning for instrumental reasons which seem to align with Hamilton's (1994) articulation of the goals for the "postindustrial model" (Trimbur, 1993) of collaborative learning. Not only did group members sometimes help him acquire the required and correct "answers," but they also listened as Bill shared his own thinking. Having the opportunity to speak his thoughts and ideas, to express his thinking in this way, seemed to support Bill's learning to do what he needed to succeed. Group learning experiences created a safe holding environment in which Bill was able to experience himself as a learner. The small cohort groups were places of collaborative learning where Bill could learn new ideas and use them to add to his own learning.

Transitioning from the Instrumental to Socializing Way of Knowing

In this section we present excerpts from the interviews we conducted with an adult learner, Hope, who constructed her experience in the transition between the Instrumental and the Socializing way of knowing (2/3 at the start of the program to 3/2 upon completion).[9] During this time of transition, both ways of knowing are fully operating, and a person has an increasing capacity for internalizing the perspectives of others. Seven of the 16 learners constructed their experience in this way; however, some had an Instrumental way of knowing leading (or primarily organizing) their meaning making while others had a Socializing structure leading.

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[9] This type of evolution in meaning system is discussed in Chapter Three.

Hope's Case

> We try to help each other, or our classmates, you know, to explain the best way. Suppose you are a bit more far ahead and than other person. You try to help the other one [in the group who is] slow[er]. (September 1998)

Hope was the oldest Polaroid learner (she was in her late 50s when we first met her) in the diploma program cohort and the oldest learner at all of our sites. Born in the Caribbean, Hope made her way to the United States in the early 1970s and began sending money home to subsidize the education of her younger siblings. Although Hope only attended school up to the seventh grade in her home country, she spoke with pride when she told us that she "made a promise" to her mother that she would help finance her younger siblings' education. In her words, "I told my mother that I want them [her siblings] to do more than [me], don't work as hard as I do. They're still working hard." Now, after many years of sacrificing for and supporting her younger siblings, Hope felt it was her time to earn her diploma.

Hope's generosity of heart, spirit, and mind was apparent as we listened to her discuss her relationships with family members, friends outside the program, colleagues at Polaroid, and peers in the diploma program. She was very much oriented to helping others; in fact, she told us it gave her a sense of satisfaction. Like Bill, Hope also valued the smaller cohort groups for the practical purpose of helping her learn the correct answers. However, unlike Bill, she derived tremendous satisfaction from the process of giving help to other cohort members and receiving both emotional and practical help from them. Hope noticed and cared about the connections she had with other members of the cohort, yet the context for the relationship was still fairly concrete. She operated with both an Instrumental and a Socializing way of knowing. A Socializing way of knowing was apparent in that she was able to see the connections between and among her words and feelings when she described her relationships with cohort members. At the same time, she described her feelings in very concrete terms (e.g., about things happening to her, what a diploma means to her in terms of getting a job), with only brief references to emotion that does not really *describe* an internal psychological experience but only *suggests* one.

At work, Hope thought of herself as being a "good team member," a quality she felt only improved over time. In her familial relationships, Hope devoted herself both emotionally and financially to supporting her younger siblings. She also went out of her way to support friends in need. When one of Hope's friends needed dialysis, she collected metal can tops from fellow cohort members to raise money so her friend could "stay a little bit longer on the machine."

In the diploma program, Hope also helped her classmates and received help from them. The cohort members, in large and small groups, were supports to Hope's learning in a variety of ways. For example, not only did Hope look to her small learning group partners for "getting help" to learn the right answers and correct mistakes (e.g., in mathematics, pronunciation, and writing), but she also valued giving and receiving encouragement as enhancing her learning.

When we first spoke with Hope in February 1998, before the program started, she talked about being an adult going back to school. She felt apprehensive about her ability to learn independently (by reading) but confident in her capacity to learn in a "hands on" manner. Hope told us she hoped she would have the confidence to ask questions of the teachers and her classmates when she needed help, and she would not "be afraid" of other people's reactions to her questions and her accent. In her prior work and learning experiences in the United States, Hope admitted that she sometimes withheld questions, fearing that others would either make fun of her accent or not understand her questions.

> To me, like, I'm not good at reading things, **but if it's put on the board, I think I absorb it more.** Sometimes I read, and I don't understand it completely. But if you show me, and I get it, it's there [in her head]. So, some people just read and everything is snapping. But for me it doesn't work that way. If it's hands on, I get it more because, I think, if you can have somebody [a teacher or classmate] . . . **and not be afraid to say you don't understand.** You have to be truthful with yourself, and don't say you understand when you don't. That [then] you'll be shown that you can get the understanding of it. **Cause if you're not truthful with the person who's teaching you, you're not going to get anything out of it.**

In Hope's view, she learned best by having another person show her how tasks needed to be done. Hope identified being "truthful" with the person who was teaching as central to her learning, but she sometimes hesitated to speak up because of her own fears. She expressed concern because she did not want other people to make fun of her, though the way she made sense of that experience was within a concrete context.

Hope wanted the classroom to be a place where it was safe for her to say that she did not understand. She spoke about her hope in this way:

> But if it's something you don't understand, I think when you come to class, if you say you don't understand that, I hope it will be explained to you, so that you can understand it. **And that you won't be scared to ask or look upon funny.** Not the other people, maybe, other people plus the teacher.

Hope repeatedly voiced concern about how she was perceived by her classmates and especially by her teachers, whom she called the people "in charge." This orientation reflects a Socializing way of knowing, as she identified with and defined her *own* sense of self-worth from other people's opinions and evaluations of her. At the same time, Hope also demonstrated an Instrumental way of knowing through her focus on the concrete ways (consequences) in which not being able to ask questions would hamper her learning.

Her learning goal in this program was to develop a trusting relationship with the teacher so she could feel safe in asking questions that would help her learn.

> **And people may look on you like you're stupid**, but if you want get something out of it, maybe you got to let they think you're stupid, by asking questions over and over again. And I hope the person who's in charge of the class don't get aggravated

> because you ask the same question over and over again because you don't understand. There got to be a trust that, you know, **you don't understand and you ask the question, that he or she [the teacher] doesn't get upset. You have to have patience, and the teacher has to have patience. And if you earn that trust between the both of you, things will work out.**

Hope was very concerned about how other people see her and treat her, which demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing. She worried about classmates making fun of her or seeing her as "stupid" because of her questions. Speaking about the trust that can develop between herself and her teachers and hoping that it is not betrayed requires at least a Socializing way of knowing. Hope focused on the quality of relationship with her teachers and how this could facilitate her learning. At the same time, the way in which she described the value of a trusting relationship between student and teacher was concrete. In describing the relationship, Hope emphasized how a teacher and student should interact: The student has to "have patience" and the teacher "has to have patience" for the student to be able to learn.

Hope was oriented to relationships with other adults in the cohort, and the way in which she understood the value of these relationships shifted subtly but importantly over time. She initially focused on her teachers as the primary support for her learning. However, after one trimester in the program, Hope began to include her cohort colleagues as another key support. In September 1998, Hope spoke about the importance of the cohort in terms of both emotional and practical support.

> Especially when we, when we get into a group. Like, sometime[s] we go in [a] group of four, and each person would add a subject to write about to talk and then talk about. Then we'd get up and explain what . . . the topic was, and what is your conclusion. So that was very, a good experience for me, because if I make a mistake, the other person would be a good back—to back me up. (PI #2, p. 7)

The emphasis Hope placed on the value of the cohort remained important throughout the duration of the program. In the third interview, she spoke more about the emotional support she felt from the cohort.

> It's like a family. Because like when one doesn't come in, we ask what's, like Veronica isn't here today and I ask, I ask Teresina what Veronica says she wasn't feeling well. And when I don't show up. The hardest part is . . . the math, the history, and the English, that's gone. **I told [them] this "We're going to breeze through this and even if it gets harder. We'll make it because we'll stick together and help each other."** (PI #3, p. 12)

We are struck by Hope's discussion of how the group became helpful to her. Not only did she discuss how cohort members helped her with learning mathematics and improving her writing skills, she also emphasized her caring interest in supporting fellow cohort members by providing them academic as well as emotional support.

Hope recognized the gift of working with other adult learners as they moved toward a common goal: earning a high school diploma.

> I wouldn't like to change my experience, because this [experience of working with others in the class] is something I'll never forget. And although, maybe, after graduation we'll all be gone in different directions, maybe some of the people I'll go to school with—I'll never see them again, but they're going to be memories that we share, that I'll never forget. (PI #2, p. 9).

In Hope's view, the learners supported one another by sharing their own knowledge, expertise, and understanding. If one person needed help applying a formula to get to an answer in math or checking subject-verb agreement to craft an essay in English, someone else who understood was always available to help. In Hope's words,

> Well, even not the small group [only], but between us [in pairs] sometimes when we are in there working together. And, see, some of us [are more] advance[d], and can help the other ones [with] general problems.

She elaborated on the value of giving and receiving help:

> Well, like, we try to help each other, or our classmates, you know, to explain the best way. Suppose you are a bit more far ahead and than other person. You try to help the other one [in the group who is] slow[er]. (PI #2, p. 3).

Here Hope referred to how cohort members helped each other learn the "best way" or the correct way. She valued being able to depend on her colleagues to help her with concrete outcomes ("right answers"), such as when they helped her to find and correct her mistakes (concrete consequences). At the same time, Hope also had a sincere interest in helping others who were struggling with learning at times. Hope also spoke with pride about learning to express herself and to communicate more effectively with other adults. Significantly, she connected her increased self-confidence to the work she had been doing in groups. She grew confident in voicing her opinions and sharing her questions.

Hope often referred to the cohort as a "family." For example, she invoked this concept in her story about learning about algebraic equations in math class. The mathematical concept of "x" was new for the majority of learners in the cohort. Although Hope said she did not feel comfortable learning this new concept, she seemed comforted by not feeling alone in not understanding. Hope repeated the phrase, "not I alone," over and over while talking about the difficulties she encountered when trying to learn new concepts. She mentioned this mostly in reference to the struggles she and others had while learning math.

> Well, . . . for the math, like when they were talking about "x" equal that, [it was hard] because I didn't know what "x" and all those things were. Not just me, alone, it was everybody else in the class—because it took us a long time . . . to get it. . . . Because all that was—is new to me, so it took us a long time to—not I alone, the other peoples [too] . . . what's "x" and, but we got it together. . . . I had never heard about "x" and all those things before—it's not just I alone. . . . (PI #2, p. 3)

Although frustrated initially by the experience of learning this new and challenging mathematical concept, she spoke strongly when she said, "But we [the cohort] got it together," which in turn helped the cohort feel comfortable. In June 1999, she reflected back on her experience of learning "the x" in math. Despite the challenges in math class, given Hope's lack of experience with algebra, she recounted, "But gradually I learned, and I think everybody learned. And we help each other." Not feeling alone and realizing that she and others in the cohort were together in trying to figure out how to work with this concept was a source of comfort and support for Hope.

For example, Hope admitted growing frustrated when learning how to solve equations with a variable in them in math.

> So, sometime I get frustrated, especially when I was doing math and sometime I'll be tired. But [her teacher] say, "You say you don't understand, but you can't explain it, but you're getting it right." I said, "Okay, then, since it's right, I'm not worried." But [a classmate] was a good encouragement. She always said, "Hope, don't get so mad with yourself." (PI #2, p. 11)

We see evidence of a Socializing way of knowing operating in that Hope focused on the emotional nature of learning with other cohort members. Although she valued being able to depend on her colleagues to help her with the "right answers," she simultaneously showed loyalty to those in her group as well as an interest in helping them. Hope's words, "not I alone," present an image of her experience in and relationship to the cohort. For Hope, the cohort formed a cohesive group united in their pursuit of a shared goal. Cohort members were both sources of emotional support and colleagues who offered answers or practical assistance that could help them to achieve their short-term goals—getting right answers—and their long-term academic goal of earning a diploma.

After Hope's math teacher informed her she was "getting it right" even if she felt she did not understand, Hope was no longer "worried" about the procedure. For Hope, "getting the right" answer (i.e., the concrete outcome) mattered, as this enabled her to have success on the test. Hope mixed an appreciation for the help other cohort members provided with a more concrete valuing of needing to know the "right way" to get "the answer" to learn in math class. Hope thought it was important to help her classmates when she knew more than they did and to receive help from them when she did not. For Hope, learning in the cohort group served both emotionally supportive and practical functions. Hope's concern for taking care of others in the group and her desire to support the group's success is indicative of her Socializing way of knowing. At the same time, Hope understood the consequences of her learning in concrete terms, demonstrating of an Instrumental way of knowing. Hope spoke powerfully about learning with cohort members in small groups and the support it provided her and others right up to the program's end.

In March 1999, we interviewed John, who taught math and science to Hope and the other learners in the diploma program, to learn his perspective on changes in the Polaroid cohort learners. John had been teaching this particular cohort for two trimesters and knew the adult learners very well. When asked to what or whom he attributed the changes he noticed in the cohort learners, he discussed in detail how Hope had become "the voice of the class." There were many times, John said, when Hope assumed leadership by telling him, in front of the entire class, that his assignments were "too much work" for the adults in the class, given their work and family responsibilities. Although Hope was completing her assignments on time and earning good grades, she wanted John to understand how difficult the workload was for some of the other learners in the cohort. John proudly shared that Hope frequently voiced important feelings that other adults could not, for one reason or another, say aloud. John also thought that Hope took on a "big sister" role with several classmates in the cohort. He often noticed Hope helping other adults complete their assignments. Hope worked with her classmates one-on-one or in small groups both during and after program classes.

John's stories attest to Hope's concern for her classmates and her increased confidence in speaking up to the teacher—the authority figure in Hope's view—on behalf of her own and her colleagues' learning. John created a classroom, a holding environment, in which it was safe for learners to express their thoughts about his pedagogical practices, enabling learners to share authority, take risks, and test new behaviors.

Hope's case is emblematic of how learners who demonstrate this way of knowing experienced working with cohort members and the cohort as a support to their academic efforts. This supported Hope as she was challenged to meet concrete learning needs. At the same time, we see Hope's orientation toward encouraging others and how she was able to give and receive support. Although Hope valued collaborative learning for instrumental reasons, which align with Hamilton's (1994) description of the goals for the "postindustrial model" (Trimbur, 1993), she and other learners with this way of knowing also appreciated the emotional and psychological supports this provided. This reasoning seems to mirror Hamilton's (1994) goals for what Trimbur (1993) calls the "social constructionist" model of collaborative learning. Next, we will turn to learners who demonstrate a fully operating Socializing way of knowing and show how they made sense of the cohort and collaborative learning as supportive of their academic efforts.

The Socializing Way of Knowing

Here, we present excerpts from our interviews with Pierre, an adult learner who constructed his experience with a full Socializing way of knowing (i.e., 3). While 11 learners had this system leading and/or operating in combination with other fully operating structures (i.e., Instrumental or Self-Authoring), Pierre demonstrated a singly operating Socializing way of knowing at program start.[10] With this way of knowing, a person's internal experience becomes the focus of his orientation. One strength of this meaning system is a capacity to internalize others' perspectives; in fact, a person with this way of knowing derives his sense of self from these perspectives.

Pierre's Case

> We all got our strengths. We all have our weaknesses. Maybe what I . . . am good at, maybe they lack of it. What they are good at, maybe I lack at it. We have all got our weaknesses to work on. . . . Well, really, I don't pay attention too much with people. Maybe when they ask question I might say, "Oh, okay." (PI #4, p. 8)

Pierre's orientation to relationships provides an important example of how a person can demonstrate a dominant and singly operating Socializing way of knowing yet have an orientation to relationships that we do not usually attribute to Socializing meaning makers. His case contrasts sharply with the majority of learners who demonstrate a Socializing way of knowing and experience fellow cohort members as sources of academic and emotional support. Pierre's case, therefore, provides a compelling example.

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[10] Toungh and Pierre demonstrated a fully operating Socializing way of knowing at the program's start and finish. Rita initially had a meaning system of 3/2 and grew to have a singly operating Socializing structure. Henry, who did not complete the program, also initially had a fully operating Socializing structure. During our final interview with him in July 1999, we assessed his way of knowing to be 3(4).

Kegan (1982) discusses the way in which a person who understands his experience through this underlying meaning system conceives the relationship between self and other. He writes,

> You are the other by whom I complete myself, the other whom I need to create the context out of which I define and know myself and the world. (p. 100)

As with all ways of knowing, each meaning system has strengths and limits. Kegan (1982) illuminates these for Socializing knowers, stating that the strength of this meaning system,

> lies in its [the self's] capacity to be conversational, freeing itself of the prior balances [i.e., the Instrumental way of knowing] frenzy making constant charge to find out what the voice will say on the other end. But its limit lies in its inability to consult itself about the shared reality. It cannot because it *is* that shared reality. (p. 96)

Pierre was embedded in or identified with his relationship with his teacher only, rather than also being identified with his relationships with his cohort colleagues (which is, in some ways, more typical of a Socializing way of knowing). In other words, Pierre derived his sense of worth from his teachers' evaluations of him. As we will show, Pierre preferred to work alone rather than with fellow cohort members and did not seem to value or enjoy interacting with other cohort learners. Unlike other learners who demonstrate a Socializing way of knowing, Pierre told us he did not seek approval from or look to fellow cohort members to help him make decisions or formulate his opinions so they might be more aligned with other valued members of the cohort. Instead, he seemed to define himself only by his teachers' opinions of him.

As we will show, Pierre located the source of his self-confidence in his teacher's help, and he saw it as the teacher's responsibility to "make" him feel self-confident (rather than seeing himself or his cohort colleagues as sources of self-confidence), which reflects a Socializing way of knowing. Later in this chapter (and in other chapters in this monograph), we will present excerpts from interviews with other Socializing knowers who were embedded in or defined by the opinions of valued others (e.g., fellow cohort members, their parents and/or loved ones, and their teachers). Here, we will highlight aspects of Pierre's meaning making to show how he experienced learning in small and large cohort groups and the change in his perspective toward the end of the program.

Pierre, who was in his late 40s when we first met him, worked full-time during the day at Polaroid and at night as a taxi driver. He emigrated from his home country in the Caribbean to the United States early in the 1980s. Unlike most of our learners, Pierre attended high school for four years in his home country. Like many of the women in the Polaroid sample, Pierre was not able to continue in school because he needed to work to support his family. When we first met Pierre, he told us he had five children from different marriages, ranging in age from mid-teens to mid-20s. At home, Pierre spoke English, French (his first language), and Creole. Although Pierre had relatives in the Boston area, he did not tell them about his decision to enroll in a diploma program. Unlike many of the other learners in our sample, Pierre did not mention a fear of being laid off; on the contrary, he seemed confident in his abilities as a learner and worker.

When we first met Pierre in March 1998, he told us he faced a barrier in terms of his learning in the program because he was not able to express his thinking clearly in English. Like Hope, he hoped to grow more "comfortable" speaking English. Pierre said that he likes to keep his learning "private." He also stated,

> A lot of time it gets me frustrated because the way I can explain, the way in explain I don't seem like clear enough to me, and I can feel the lack in myself. I'm not, I don't feel comfortable. (PI #1, p. 1)

Pierre recognized this internal feeling as "frustrat[ion];" he was aware how his accent influenced how other people (at work and in other domains of his life) responded to him. Here, Pierre demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing in that he was concerned about how he was viewed by others. It was a source of pride for him to be able to convey his fullest self to others. Pierre made an important distinction between what he was able to *say* (given his expressive language skills) and what he *knew*. This does not seem to be about experiencing himself as a *generator* of knowledge (which would be a Self-Authoring construction), but about expressing the knowledge he already had learned—which was contingent upon being able to have the vocabulary and language skills needed to communicate.

In our second meeting with Pierre, in September 1998, he provided more details about what it would mean for him to feel "comfortable" in his learning. Comfort came from "knowing more words," being able to "see more, understand more," and not taking much "time to answer" a question directed at him. After attending the program for a trimester, he felt more "comfortable" because he was "able to understand more now." He explained:

> And a lot of thing(s), I used to hear on the street, [I] never know the meaning of it, I just say the word, doesn't know what it mean. And I can say a lot of them, I feel comfortable with them now.

He contrasted this feeling of confidence with the "nightmare" of not knowing the words. Pierre connected his comfort with learning with his confidence, which had grown alongside his language skills as a result of his participation in the program:

> Oh, I feel confident. To me . . . I would be more confident than I am now because I'm willing to learn because it was a nightmare a lot of time. **And just the words you don't know. And words and the meaning of it. . . . The word and you don't know what it's meaning. And it's an embarrassing moment for me. But now I feel pretty confident. . . . It's really important to me**. . . . I'm still in the learning process. My mind is open to learn because there is a lot of things. . . . But for a full month I see a lot. And more and more I'm going to see more when the time goes by. I'm going to see more because it's really important to me. And they really give me . . . myself. **They put me on the self confident, I can learn**. (PI #2, pp. 3–4)

Pierre was interested in understanding the meaning of words, rather than learning for the sake of getting the "right answer." He told us he felt embarrassed when he did not know the meaning of words; he was concerned about how other people viewed him and seemed to define himself in terms of how other people view him (evidence of his Socializing way of knowing).

Toward the end of the program, with much less fear about misunderstanding others or being misunderstood by them, he reported, "I feel comfortable enough to stand in front of anybody and discuss anything, and I would find my answer." Like many of the learners in the sample who are non-native speakers of English, Pierre wanted very much to be able to "stand" in front of other people and express himself in English well. In Pierre's case, his strong orientation to how others view him, combined with his concern to avoid "embarrassing" himself, points to a Socializing way of knowing. Importantly, Pierre located the source of his self-confidence in his teacher's help, and he saw it as the teacher's responsibility to "make" him feel self-confident, which reflects a Socializing way of knowing. In response to a question about the teacher's help, he said, "Maybe they can . . . see, I have a sense to understand. And they [the teachers] make me feel self-confident, so I can." However, the manner in which Pierre preferred to learn was mostly by himself—or with the teacher's help—which sharply contrasts with the majority of learners in this cohort who experienced fellow cohort members as sources of academic and emotional support.

Unlike most other adult learners in the program, Pierre did not like working in small learning groups because, in his words, "thinking alone I'm doing my best." He reported that when he disagrees with what was said by others in a group, he "goes along" with their opinions because he does not want to "disappoint" them. He explained, "If that's what [people in the group] want, that's what you want. I know to me, that's what I want." Pierre seemed to look to a set of socially defined rules of appropriate behavior as to how to treat others both within group learning situations and work contexts, which seemed to be based on a strong sense of wanting to treat others the way he would like to be treated.

Pierre also told us that he would "move on" if a classmate sat next to him, meaning he would physically move away from the other person. When Pierre was required to work with others on an in-class assignment, he would try to work in pairs rather than in larger groups. Pierre's math and science teacher, John, described him as "extraordinary" in his "resistance" to group work. When John commented on the changes he noticed in Pierre during the program, he said,

> Pierre is exceptional in one very important way . . . he was the most resistant to working in groups. He has a very strong tendency to set himself aloof and want to work independently. He expressed to me at various times that he also liked to get his focus and go with it. Sometimes the negative side of that was he would take the assignment and interpret it. I think what he would really like to do is to take a question and sit back and think and then produce something that he has come up with in his mind. And us [the teachers in the program] imposing stages you should go through to do a process fit in with that overall resistance, the same resistance as his working with others.

Nonetheless, John remembered that Pierre's resistance to group work would dissipate after he engaged productively with a small group of learners. In spite of Pierre's resistance to "group activities," John spoke of "a lot of the positive times when [Pierre] was working in group was where his explanations were actually very helpful to other people. Because he had a rephrasing capacity that was good."

> But there were a number of times, like in a group task, where he started with that resistance but then, upon engaging, he would start to see the point. He's very

> thoughtful and reflective type of person. But he usually thought he would have a better way of doing something, and that was part of the resistance to group. Let's say there also developed a kind of a comfortable situation where in talking he would start to talk too much. And I noticed the rest of the group like rolling their eyes or [saying] "Oh-oh, it's another tangent," whatever Pierre's going to come up with. There were other times it seemed like he was pretty good presence as far as keeping people on focus.

Pierre took pride in being sensitive not to impose his questions on fellow classmates, which may be another example of Pierre's interest in abiding by what he considered socially appropriate norms of behavior. Rather than soliciting help from a classmate when he was "struggling" with an assignment (like many other Socializing knowers might do), Pierre preferred to "call [his] teacher, 'Okay, here's where I am, what should I do?'" It may be that Pierre viewed his teacher as the only source of authoritative knowledge and therefore the only person he needed to consult to have his question answered. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as Pierre thinking he would rather not impose his question on a classmate or interrupt her, given his desire to follow what he considered appropriate rules of social behavior.

But in the last interview just before graduation, Pierre felt far more certain about his English skills and also began to align himself with peers in the cohort in small but significant ways. When asked if there were people other than the teachers who were helpful to his learning, Pierre responded with a definitive "no." However, for the first time, Pierre reflected on similarities between how he and other cohort members were struggling to learn English. He seemed to align himself with people in the cohort in that he developed, or had an appreciation for, other people's struggle to learn English but not with their experience in the classroom.[11]

> We all was [in the same boat], all foreigners. [Two] of them wasn't, they were American. We're [the rest of the cohort] all foreigners. We are all here for the same goal—learn English better because so many of them really struggle at their workplace. They cannot explain themselves and if . . . there is a promotion, promotion around, they can't do it just by not having high school diploma.

Pierre likened himself to others in the cohort, in that they were also "foreigners" and working toward a common goal in the diploma program. From his point of view, all members of the cohort had their "strengths" and "weaknesses."

> There is few, but we all got our strengths. We all have our weaknesses. Maybe what I, what I am good at, maybe they lack of it. What they are good at, maybe I lack at it. We have all got our weaknesses to work on. . . . Well, really, I don't pay attention too much with people. Maybe when they ask question I might say, "Oh, okay." (PI #4, p. 8)

The way Pierre understood that everyone was different and the same as he was demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing. For Pierre, it seems that difference is made okay because everyone is still connected and basically the same, which preserves the relationships. Even at the end of the program (June 1999), Pierre continued to prefer learning on his own. When asked if his relationships with members of the cohort had changed, Pierre said no, adding that he did not "pay attention too much" to the other adults in his cohort. In contrast to Hope, who appreciated the opportunity to work with cohort members for academic and emotional reasons, Pierre mostly thought his classmates distracted him from his real goal of listening to what the teacher said.

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[11] We have omitted the interviewer's words/questions from most quotations to place emphasis on the participants' words.

In the last interview, Pierre spoke powerfully about the ways in which he was embedded in other people's opinions of him. For example, when asked if there have been times when he felt his own home country's cultural values dictated certain ways of behaving—and those ways of behaving were in opposition to the culture in which he was living—Pierre told us he would change his behaviors to adhere to cultural norms.

> So, naturally, I change too, I do to work, when I came to the United States, I do what the United States wants, when I'm in [his home country], I do what [people who live there] wants, **so I go by what people want**. I try to learn, different country, I always watch what people do before I start doing my own thing. . . . Because that's their country, that's their culture, I cannot change it. I cannot change because that's the way God made it, I cannot change it. . . . I'm different on my own. . . . I'm different on my own, they might say "Oh, this guy must come from here," because of the way I acted.

Pierre voiced his concern about acting in accordance with the cultural values of the country in which he was living. Kegan (1994), in addressing the expectations and demands of the modern workplace, emphasizes how individuals with a Socializing way of knowing need to be "in alignment with" the values of the culture. Being out of sync with the expectations of the culture (whether it is the culture of the workplace or the culture at large) is, for these individuals, threatening to their selves. For Socializing knowers like Pierre, Kegan (1994) maintains, "the ultimate goal is being in alignment with—being in good faith with—a value-creating surround . . . winning the approval and acceptance of others" is of ultimate importance for these knowers (p. 171).

Pierre viewed the teacher as the person responsible for supporting his learning. While other learners also saw the teacher as a key support to their learning, none of them saw *only* the teacher as a support. All of them, except for Pierre, viewed their classmates as supports. It is important to highlight that although Pierre was a Socializing knower who needed to validation and acceptance from important others in his life, in our interviews with him, he did say he had close relationships with any of the other cohort members. We can only surmise that Pierre looked to a different set of important others for his sense of belonging.

Transitioning from the Socializing to the Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

In this section we present Paulo's case as an example of a learner who was making meaning of his experiences in the transition between the Socializing and the Self-Authoring ways of knowing. Four of the 16 cohort members constructed their experience in this way. We will show how in this time of transition both structures, Socializing and Self-Authoring, are operating. One of the strengths of this meaning system is that a person with a Self-Authoring way of knowing has the capacity to take a perspective on interpersonal relationships and shared loyalty.

Paulo's Case

> If you work together, everything is be easy. . . . You have to work together. . . . You learn more working together. (PI #3, p. 14).

Paulo, born in West Africa, was in his early 40s when we met him. Almost immediately, he told us how proud he was that he was now "an American citizen." Although he spoke four languages (Creole, Spanish, Portuguese, and English), one of his hopes for learning in the diploma program was to improve his English speaking skills. He was married with four children ranging from toddlers to young adults.

When he first joined Polaroid in the mid-1980s, just after immigrating to the United States, he needed to learn English to communicate with coworkers and supervisors. He had been very successful at Polaroid, so much so that, while participating in the CEI program, Paulo was promoted at least twice, an achievement he attributed to improved skills in math, writing, and communication. Paulo was "very proud and happy" about his accomplishments at work and in the program; he frequently stated that he was feeling "very, very strong" because of all he was learning. Paulo attached great value to the recognition he had received from his plant manager and the Polaroid engineers for his performance on the job—making these important others happy made him happy.

As a team leader at work, Paulo was one of only two adult learners in the diploma program who held an official leadership position at Polaroid. Paulo talked about subtle but important qualities he possessed that, in his view, made him an effective team leader. For example, when he "corrects" people who work for him, he always focused on helping them be better in their work. This carried over into the way Paulo perceived good interactions between a teacher and student, and among cohort members.

> You have to be patient to speak things. You have to be able to work with me. So I am the team leader where I work. If I say those people, "Oh you do something wrong, we don't have to do next time." [accusing tone] So I would be mad. But if you talked nice, "So this one is going a little bit bad, so next time, you try to do it this way, or try to do it this way, see how the things going, try to do this way if it's more easy for you, then the work is going better. So this is repeat, and do better next time." **The same thing happens to a student when a teacher show you something good,** or when you do this one wrong next time, you put the verbs here first, then this word don't match with this one, and so on. **So next time you don't try to say, "You do wrong all the time. You don't do good!"** [Laughs] **. . . Be patient, be patient.** (PI #1, 23–24)

For Paulo, being "patient" and "talking nice" were key components of effective interpersonal communication, at work and in the classroom. Also in this first interview, Paulo emphasized the importance of having teachers who understood "who" he was and "where" he came from for them to be good teachers to him. For Paulo, it was critical that the teacher and other cohort learners understood that he was "not stupid" and that he may need additional help learning because he spoke English as a second language. If the teacher understood his "background," he told us, learning would be "more easy" for him. This meant that if teachers and other adult learners knew he was born in West Africa and not a native English speaker, it would it be easier for him to ask for and receive help from them. Paulo's experience of this kind of mutual respect among teacher and learners made the cohort a safe holding environment for him.

Paulo stood out to us as the most self-motivated of all of the Polaroid learners. Throughout our interviews, Paulo conveyed a strong interest in learning how to access information and better communicate his ideas. He enrolled in the program largely because he wanted to gain access to information from multiple sources which, in his view, would help him make informed decisions (e.g., where to send his daughter to college, how to buy a house and apply for a mortgage). For Paulo, knowing how to maneuver in systems (i.e., society at large, the educational system, and the economy) helped him overcome anxiety and bolstered his confidence in his decision-making ability. In his words, "If you [don't] know, or if you don't read instruction, or you don't go to the meeting, or you don't go to some class to show you to buy the house, you be afraid." The element that marks Paulo's eagerness to improve his decision-making ability as arising from a Self-Authoring way of knowing is that the most important thing to Paulo was to have the information for ***himself*** so he could decide for himself. If he were more firmly in the Socializing way of knowing, Paulo would likely be happy to have access to other important decision-makers whose opinions he might then adopt as his own. In the transition to Self-Authoring, however, it was vital to have his own access to information. Throughout the program, Paulo talked about what it meant to him to learn and to have knowledge. Paulo did not want to just learn the rules of the right things to do so he could then do them (which would be a Instrumental construction), he wanted to have the knowledge to make *his own decisions* about how to manage his money and life.

Paulo possessed a lovely gentleness and generosity of heart, which was reflected in his relationships with other cohort members. For example, Paulo's math and science teacher, John, recognized Paulo's ability and inclination to teach others when he told us how Paulo was one of his "best helpers" in math and science classes. In John's view, Paulo was "very helpful with people," because, although Paulo was "pretty low key about it . . . he was a computer user/Internet browser and would find things for people they could use [for their research reports]." Paulo helped several adult learners by giving them information from the Internet that they used in the scientific research reports for science class. However, Paulo preferred working with others in pairs, not in small learning groups. Small group work was "difficult" for him because disagreements that occur (a Socializing construction) distracted him, taking away from the time he could spend on his own learning (a Self-Authoring construction).

Compared to others, Paulo talked surprisingly little about his interpersonal relationships with cohort members. Nonetheless, he told us how he made sense of group work. In Paulo's view, both the teachers and the students were responsible for supporting students' learning (quite different from an Instrumental construction of group work, which gives full responsibility to the teacher, as we discussed earlier). For Paulo, it was important when working in groups to share knowledge with others if you were the person who knows something "a little better." In his view, all of the adult learners were "go[ing] in the same direction." If one did not "catch something," the teacher *and the other group members* were responsible to help that person "catch it." Paulo's reference to "catching" knowledge seems to be cultural, rather than an illustration that knowledge is a single thing (which would be illustrative of an Instrumental construction). "Catching knowledge" is an idiom in Cape Verdean and Puerto Rican cultures which seems to mean learning and a phrase that refers to knowledge acquisition (see Munoz, 2000).

At this point in the program, Paulo believed that working alone or in groups of two were the most effective ways for him to learn. He preferred to avoid larger groups, because they invite conflict. He explained,

> Me and one person together, I think it's more helpful to me than group. Because sometime one person in a group disagree with you, so then start a lot of talk; until you finish, you don't put together to understand. Yeah, a lot of disagree, and lot of talking. But when myself and somebody else, we can put together easily. If I say something wrong [the other person helps and says] "maybe it's supposed to be like that." So that's put easy. . . . When group, sometimes a group, five or six, you have a lot of disagree, some say it this way, some say it another way, some say, "Oh, this is wrong, this one is right." So you have a lot of disagree. [Sometimes group members say,] "You don't understand nothing." You can catch nothing. You feel like you don't learn nothing.

While we have shown the way Paulo made sense of his experience with a Self-Authoring way of knowing, it is important to remember that he was, simultaneously, making sense of his experience with a Socializing way of knowing. Paulo demonstrated a Self-Authoring way of knowing when he took responsibility for his own learning and reflected on what it takes for him to facilitate his learning. For example, although he understood that disagreements within groups were moving toward a larger goal (i.e., learning), he preferred the pair work that felt more conducive to his own learning.

Although it was important to him that group members respect him and each other (rather than making comments like, "You don't know nothing"), he was concerned about cohort members' opinions of him. Paulo did not appreciate other people thinking he was inadequate or his opinions were wrong (demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing). While adults at all developmental stages may dislike conflict situations, those making meaning with a Socializing way of knowing often find conflict with others threatening, as it can be experienced as a breach in relationships that make the self cohere. Kegan (1982) eloquently illuminates how Socializing knowers experience conflict. He writes,

> [For Socializing knowers] conflicts are not really conflicts between what I want and what someone else wants. When looked into, they regularly turn out to be conflicts between what I want to do as a part of this shared reality and what I want to do as part of that shared reality. To ask someone [with this way of knowing] to resolve such a conflict by bringing both shared realities before herself is to name precisely the limits of this way of making meaning. "Bringing before oneself" *means* not being subject to it [or identified with it], being able to take it as object [or to have a perspective on it], just what [a person with this meaning system] cannot do. (p. 96)

However, when a learner is growing towards a Self-Authoring way of knowing, he has a capacity to recognize that conflict can be a way to learn more, and agreement is not an end in itself but a means toward some greater end—an opportunity for growth. While Paulo understood that all cohort members were working toward a common goal, he preferred less conflict in learning situations because it interfered with his learning.

But Paulo's thinking about his relationship to the cohort and his experience in small-group learning changed remarkably over time. Contrary to his earlier opinion that people learned the most alone or in pairs, by our third meeting (February 1999), Paulo had come to believe that a person learns more in a group. At this point, Paulo reported feeling more "comfortable" with other cohort members, meaning that others understood him, which was critical to his learning. Moreover, Paulo no longer felt bad or inadequate if he made a mistake pronouncing a word, for example, when working with other learners in small groups. In the following example of how he received help pronouncing words correctly in small groups and helped others in math, Paulo conveyed his value of group work. When asked what helped make group learning good for him, he said,

> You know, you [can say] anything, like you say wrong. I don't feel bad if we, I read, I say something in English bad. You correct me, say, "Oh, you supposed to say this way not that way." So exactly, when I learn math **I try help my costudents** how to do the math, all that was what's come sometime, like I [meet them], 10 minute or 15 before the classes. Or you do your homework, let me see if you do exactly the way or why you don't try to do this work this way. So there is a very helpful . . . . [The group is] a good way to learn, because if you see anything, you see wrong pronunciation, so anybody can help you, or the pronunciation is supposed to [be] this way, or math if you know, you can help work together, work in team. The same on homework. If you work together, everything is be easy. If you work by yourself, that's not [inaudible]. You have to work together. You learn more working together. (PI #3, p. 14)

Paulo's thinking about the value of group work and his relationship to the cohort changed during the program. We suggest that this was not just a change of *opinion* for Paulo. Instead, his new ideas about the importance of group work might stem from his growing capacities for Self-Authorship, which supply him with an ability to have a new relationship to collaborative learning. In other words, Paulo might not simply have grown more comfortable in groups because he was used to working in them and working with his colleagues, he might have grown more comfortable in groups because he was less embedded in their opinions about him. At the Socializing way of knowing, as discussed earlier, it can be very painful to have others disagree with you. As Paulo becomes more Self-Authoring, however, he was able to have perspective on his cohort relationships and not be *made up by* those relationships any more. In this case, they can help one another work and disagree with one another without harming the fabric of the relationship itself. Kegan (1982) describes the movement from a Socializing to a Self-Authoring way of knowing, emphasizing how a person moves from *being* his relationships to *having* them.

> In separating itself from the context of interpersonalism, meaning-evolution authors a self which maintains coherence across a shared psychological space and so achieves an identity. This authority—sense of self, self-dependence, self-authorship—is its hallmark. In moving from "I am my relationships" to "I have my relationships," there is now somebody who is doing this having, the new I, who, in coordinating or reflecting upon mutuality, brings into being a kind of psychic institution. . . . (p. 100)

At the same time Paulo reported his growing comfort with group learning, he spoke about how proud he was of the improvements he noticed in his ability to express himself in English and how this made a difference in multiple domains of his life. Since skills are the foundation for all actions, no matter how complex a person's thinking or how excellent a person's decision making, a person cannot benefit fully from learning opportunities unless he can speak and express himself in the dominant language.

. The program cohort, a holding environment in which Paulo and other learners were *known, understood, and recognized* by each other and their teachers (learner–teacher relationships will be discussed in the next chapter), helped Paulo feel safe expressing himself, making mistakes, and giving and receiving help. In this way, the consistent and enduring nature of the cohort was a holding environment that both supported and challenged Paulo.

The Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

Only one member of the cohort, Jeff, made sense of his experience in a way that solely reflected a Self-Authoring way of knowing, though four other adults, Magda, Daniel, Christopher, and Paulo, made meaning in the transition between Socializing and Self-Authoring ways of knowing.

Jeff's Case

> What you do with the knowledge after it's given to you is of your choosing.

One of the two U.S.-born adult learners in the Polaroid cohort, Jeff was in his late 40s when he began the program. Originally from the South, he moved to the Northeast when he was in the seventh grade. Through high school, Jeff continued to have "a hard transition" in adjusting to the demands of school. In 11th grade, he told his mother that he could not "cut it" and decided to enroll in trade school. After attending trade school for two years, he returned to high school but left before completing eleventh grade. He then enlisted in the Army, as his father had done before him. When we met Jeff, he lived alone and had two children from a previous marriage.

Jeff worked the C shift, 11:00 PM to 7:00 AM, at Polaroid, where he made batteries. He told us the machines he operated fascinate him. Whereas most of the other adult learners solved work problems by asking a supervisor or looking at a computer screen for instructions, Jeff preferred "figuring things out" on his own. Jeff described himself as someone who feels in charge of himself, his profession, his work, and his interests.

Jeff first enrolled in the diploma program the year before we began our research project, but he stopped out of it very quickly (after three weeks). He also began a GED course soon before our first interview but chose not to complete it. Jeff was one of only three learners in this class who did not have the responsibility of caring for young children or ill family members.

Initially, Jeff expected that working with other adults who had different academic needs (e.g., learning to express themselves better in English) would prove challenging. Yet over time Jeff cultivated an appreciation for working with his peers. Jeff's thinking about how and why it was helpful to learn with other people differs significantly from others whose stories we have presented. His reasons for valuing group work focus on the process of collaboration itself rather than the opportunity to give and receive practical or emotional support around learning. Furthermore, Jeff recognized he was able to learn through group work and to gain awareness of other adults' learning processes. He explained,

> Like I said, everybody's learning is different. Everybody's learning is different. And come to find out, what they [other learners who had learned math in their home

> countries] were doing, they were applying these math skills that they had already learned in their country. They were trying to apply [them] to the American [system] and, come to find out, [that] what John was saying, they were doing it, but they were doing it the way they were shown [in their home countries] [and] coming up with the same answer. Which when me and Bill [the other person in the class who was born in America and had learned the "American way" to do math] did it, we had this big long thing. We had the answer, but the problem was worked out. But yet the way they did it, they had half of the problem, but their shortcuts were better.

Jeff told us that helping others is also a way to help himself learn about their processes. If the act of being able to help others gave Jeff his sense of self-worth, his construction of this would be illustrative of a Socializing way of knowing. Instead, while Jeff enjoyed the process of helping his colleagues, he was also able to hold a perspective on his own and other cohort members' learning experiences.

Jeff possessed the capacity to take a larger perspective on the group's learning and to share his internal reflections about how and why he valued group work.

> [In groups,] it was like, okay, you might get stuck here, on, say, four and five. [I'd say] "Well, okay, I did." I sit here and look at my paper, "Well, you did this, how about trying this?" and kinda explain. And then once they [people in his group] finished, we took our papers and showed it to them, which they came up with the same answers we did. I think it was just the process of helping them, or her, get over that, and made it easier . . . I guess for them and me. . . . Well, like I said, we all have the same problem to work with. And why can I understand it, and you can't understand it.

It was the "process" of joining together in true collaboration that made the group learning so meaningful for Jeff. Jeff took pleasure in being able to help cohort members experience academic success and also found fulfillment in his own achievements. His reasoning about why group learning with cohort members was beneficial comes from his own standards (demonstration of a Self-Authoring way of knowing) and was not influenced by an external authority, which would reflect a Socializing way of knowing. Jeff demonstrated he could critique his own competence and limitations as a learner, which reflects a Self-Authoring way of knowing. Not only was he able to share what he knew with others, he also recognized he was able to learn from the process of working with others in groups.

In developing his own perspective about the value of groups in the larger enterprise of learning, Jeff demonstrates remarkable capacities of perspective-taking and self-authorization. These ideas were echoed in our last interview with Jeff, in June 1999, when he elaborated on his sense of how learning worked for him. Through his work with other cohort members, Jeff felt he had been able to discover his own capabilities. In Jeff's words, "I realized that I know more than I thought I did." Particularly striking is how he uses this newfound awareness to push himself toward deeper understanding. The act of doing, writing, and working in cohort learning groups with others facilitated his learning. The group was helpful to Jeff because "it helps when other people see your mistake. And other people can show you." Jeff continued by telling us how this worked for him:

> We were given homework, and, you know, you go home, and you do it. And some of the things, you were able to do 'em all, but then, like, one or two problems, you

> always run into that one that you can't. . . . We'd come back the next Tuesday or the next Thursday, and we'd review what we'd done, and all that. And John [the teacher] would ask, "Well, did anybody run into any problems that they couldn't solve?" and all that. And we all did . . . from either Tuesday or Thursday, had problems that, one that we got stumped on. And by putting it up on the board and . . . going from step-to-step, and all this, things that I missed on it, somebody else says, "Oh. You forgot this, this, and this." Which, when you look, you realize what it was you've done. But yourself, you can't,pick it up. . . . You can't see no further or no other way. But with that little help, and all that—you might have forgot a number—you might have put a decimal, you know, in the wrong place or something like that.

Jeff illuminated *how* learning in cohort groups was helpful to him and others. It was the learning process that made a difference to his learning. And in this passage, he demonstrates his Self-Authoring capacity to take a perspective on his own and other cohort members' learning experiences. Jeff appreciated the complexity of other people's learning experiences while having a perspective on his own experience and how it was similar to and different from his colleagues.

Jeff often played the role of shepherd or protector of the members of the cohort. One way he did this was by looking out for their learning needs—especially the learning needs of cohort members who spoke English as a second language and by taking a stand with John, the math teacher, on behalf of others. We will highlight how this example illuminates Jeff's Self-Authoring way of knowing.

In February 1999, Jeff shared an example from the prior trimester when, for the class and himself, he needed to tell John that John was "losing" the class by teaching too fast. In Jeff's view, many cohort members were not able to absorb the concept of using a variable, the "x," to solve an equation that John was teaching. Jeff, at this time, admitted that he, too, was a bit "lost." Jeff told John to slow down so his classmates could understand the material. He reminded John that many of the other adult learners in the class have additional responsibilities and commitments (caring for young children and ailing family members) because they are adults who had lives outside the program. Jeff recalled,

> Well, . . . [members of the class are] coming from a foreign country, and you go to school, and you learn this way. And then you come to America, and you all of a sudden have to change because you live here. You have to do it the American way. And I kind of think it makes it harder. . . . Well, like when John explained something, you know. [Here Jeff is referring to the way John taught the "x" to the class.] You can see different things—you can tell by people's expressions if they understand, if they don't understand. . . . I said, once we started the first day of algebra, it was like they [the other members of the cohort who did not learn the "American way" to do math] were all [lost]. Well, we all were kind of lost. I says [to John], "I kindly got a feeling that going into the algebra class," I said, "you basically kind of lost a big majority of the class." He [John] says, "Yes, I think I [did]." He [John] says, "I felt that, too." And then when we came back the next week, he [John] backed up. And went into more details on the beginning of algebra, which, more explanation, which that was all better.

Jeff demonstrates some of what is the hallmark of a Self-Authoring way of knowing: the ability to take the perspective of others (as he showed by talking about the experience of learning in a foreign country) without losing a sense of his own perspective. While Jeff valued and understood their experiences, his own experience was quite different. Having very different experiences of the same event was a given for Jeff, pointing to a Self-Authoring construction.

In our last interview, Jeff spoke once again about this experience of taking a stand with John on behalf the cohort. Interestingly, Jeff spontaneously brought up this example in response to a question we asked him about "Who or what in the program this year has helped you to learn the most?" Here we highlight Jeff's Self-Authoring capacity to take a perspective on his own and others' experience of being in the program. He was able to reflect on his own actions and on how the group and John benefited from Jeff's actions. In Jeff's view, the math class got better because he talked with John about how his classmates were not able to grasp the concepts John was teaching and suggested that John slow down. Jeff was proud he had followed his own decision (guided by his own internally generated standards) to take a stand with John on behalf of—as he remembered it—the learning needs of the cohort.

> After everybody left, I had said to John, I says, "You know, I understand. I hear what you're saying," but I says, "For the rest of the class" . . . like I said, can't say foreigners, but . . . English [as] second language students. I says, "You're losing that part of the class." I says, "You only have [people who speak English as a first language] . . . the other 90 percent of the class, they're all from other countries, and it's harder for them to understand what you're saying. You have to explain yourself. You have to show them more details." And he says, "I kinda sensed or felt that." But, he says, "I wasn't sure." Once he started putting stuff down and going around to each one of 'em and showing and explaining, they understood more and better, which helped turn that class around and made all of them feel more comfortable.

In his reflections on impediments to his peers' learning, Jeff was able to hold the multiple views of himself, ESOL learners in the cohort, and his teacher. When recommending a change in his teacher's instruction, Jeff used his own judgment and appealed to his own internally generated value system. His decision to talk with John on behalf of the cohort demonstrated his capacity to have a perspective on the larger context, to take a stand for his own beliefs or on behalf of others, and to take responsibility for his own decisions. This example also illustrates Jeff's capacity to understand the group's experience. Jeff showed his caring nature and concern for the cohort's common goal, and he had the capacity to turn inward his value system to decide what he needed to do in this situation (Self-Authoring capacity).

When we asked John in March 1999 about the changes he noticed in the adult learners in his classes and to what he attributed the changes, Jeff immediately came to his mind—he was the first adult learner John talked about in that interview.

> Jeff has changed dramatically. He's become more, much more confident overall and certainly more confident in speaking and not so worried about making mistakes. . . . He had a frightened look for a while, in the program, that [he] definitely has

> become . . . much more of an advocate for the students which is really good. And he just stands out as someone who started out so scared and has asserted himself very nicely. Like doing projects in the science course very much ahead of pace from the rest of the class because, part of it was because of the way he used the instructions, and his diligence really paid off. So once he knew that he was always on pace or better, I think it helped him realize that he wasn't not only the worst possible student, that he was doing very well relative to others because of his persistence, so. . . . Yeah, when I first noticed his frightened look was very early in the math course, where he would be doing something he'd never been comfortable with. He came up to me after class once [and said], "You know I didn't finish the fifth grade." Something to that effect. At the time, he was somewhat comfortable talking about it, but he did have a fear that he wasn't going to be able to do it [complete the program].

John felt that Jeff was an "advocate" for the other cohort learners. Jeff's capacity to see the bigger picture—a Self-Authoring capacity—and his internally generated value system appear to have likely made him want this "advocate" role. We also learned that, from John's perspective, it was Jeff's "diligence" and "persistence" to succeed that helped him gain confidence that he could complete the program and earn his high school diploma.

Jeff, like Hope, often became "the voice of the class," in his teacher's words, taking a wide variety of needs into account as he advocated to improve everyone's learning experiences. Jeff frequently spoke with John and voiced feelings that other learners were somewhat afraid to communicate about their learning experiences and about his teaching methods. John referred to Jeff as being one of the "leaders" in the cohort. In John's words,

> I'm just thinking, he and Hope. He became, they both played this role of [being a helper to other students.] [Jeff worked with other cohort members by saying,] "Here I'll show you," "It's not so hard," or that type of thing. [Jeff would say to a person he was trying to help,] "You do it like this" and you know, [Jeff would say it] somewhat in opposition to me [laugh] like, "He [John] makes it complicated, here is the easy way" or something, but not [in a mean way]. [*To you as the teacher?*] That's right.

John's comments shine light on how Jeff shared his own knowledge with other cohort members and how he worked with them. He helps us see how Jeff is both strong and gentle. Jeff was not the only learner in the Polaroid class who made recommendations to John about how he could improve his teaching. John said that Daniel (to be introduced in the next section) also talked with him about how his teaching methods were working for *him*. To our knowledge, Jeff and Hope were the only learners who raised this issue of the entire class' pedagogical needs.

In this section, we have demonstrated that the cohort, which at this site was sustained over 14 months, served as a holding environment spacious enough to support and challenge learners with *qualitatively different* ways of knowing. Specifically, we have highlighted how learners *differently* experienced the cohort as a support to their academic learning, and we have shown how these adults with a wide range of ways of knowing *differently* made sense of their collaborative learning experiences in cohort groups,[12] depending on their meaning system.

Significantly, we have shown how learners across ways of knowing valued the cohort for *instrumental* reasons (i.e., it helped them achieve concrete goals, which closely align with Hamilton's (1994) conceptualization of Trimbur's (1993) "postindustrial model"); however, Instrumental knowers valued the cohort for these concrete reasons *only*. Socializing knowers, while valuing the instrumental supports provided by working with fellow cohort members, also appreciated collaborating with cohort members for the emotional and psychological support it provided as they pursued their academic learning (i.e., reasons that align with Hamilton's stated goals for Trimbur's (1993) "social constructionist" model). Lastly, Self-Authoring knowers not only named the instrumental and emotional supports as important, they also focused on the ways in which working with others helped broaden their perspectives as they pursued their academic goals (i.e., reasons that align with Hamilton's goals for Trimbur's (1993) "popular democratic" model). By presenting case examples of learners who have qualitatively different underlying meaning systems, we have pointed to how each learner's meaning system shaped the experience of the *teaching and learning function* of the cohort. We contend that the cohort served as a holding environment for these adult learners as they struggled to make sense of and engage in academic learning.

Feeling recognized by each other and their teachers for the selves they were and the selves they were becoming helped these learners feel held in the psychological sense and supported by each other. We discussed how John, in particular, did this by creating learning opportunities through which cohort members engaged in a variety of collaborative learning experiences that were both supportive and challenging to learning. John supported and challenged cohort members collectively and individually as he provided different forms of support and challenge in learning situations. As Bosworth & Hamilton (1994) point out, a collaborative learning context is one in which "at least some aspects of classroom knowledge and authority can be developed or created by both students and teacher" (p. 18). John and other CEI teachers worked with learners to share authority and enhance learning.

Later in this chapter we will discuss how learners made sense of the "Life Stories" exercise that Judith, the Life Employment Workshop teacher, assigned during the final trimester of the program. In this exercise and others in the CEI curriculum like it (e.g., science research project and oral report, the Freedom Trail field trip), learners worked independently and in small groups, with guidance from their teachers and peers, before presenting their work to the entire class. Based on our classroom observations and interviews, these types of experiences seem to have been opportunities in which classroom knowledge and authority were shared and created by learners and teachers.

Together, the cohort members and the CEI teachers created a holding environment within the structure of the classroom. While the vast majority of learners valued the supports provided by group learning, the cohort also served as a holding environment that gently challenged them. Later, when we discuss the perspective broadening function of the cohort, we will highlight additional ways the cohort served as a holding environment that gently challenged learners. We now turn to how cohort members supported one another in nonacademic ways.

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[12] As we have discussed, Pierre, a Socializing knower, preferred working on his own or with the teacher. He is the only learner in this sample who did not experience his classmates as an additional source of support. However, toward the end of the program, Pierre aligned himself, for the first time, with fellow cohort members in that he had a newly developed appreciation for other people's struggles to learn English.

SECTION III: "LIKE A FAMILY": THE COHORT AS A HOLDING ENVIRONMENT FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

> But I think all of us, we made it because we help each other. But now the group is breaking up, and we are going different ways. It's like a family going apart . . . like when your child leaves home . . . that's the way I feel. I don't know about the other people. . . . Although we don't know each other's address completely and phone number, when we were together . . . it was like a family. (Hope, June 1999)

We have discussed the ways that collaboration within cohort groups enhanced *learning* opportunities for adults in the Polaroid diploma program. While the literature on group learning points to ways in which these experiences serve as a *social and emotional* support (see, for example Bosworth & Hamilton, 1994; Pedersen & Digby 1995), our study offers a new perspective on some of the ways consistent and enduring cohorts and learning groups support learners' well-being. We employ our developmental perspective to show that this emotional support is experienced differently by learners who make meaning in different ways. In this section, we focus on the ways cohort members supported each other in nonacademic ways. While for many participants the cohort became, as Hope and others said, "like a family," what "family" actually meant to these learners was different, depending on their ways of knowing.

Although the majority of these learners credited their colleagues with contributing to their success, we will focus on five adults at different developmental places who spoke at length about how the cohort provided emotional support as they participated in the program (see Table 4).

Table 4: Cases to Illustrate the Cohort as a Holding Environment for Emotional Support

Name	**Gender/Age at Program's Start**	**Region Of Origin**	**Way Of Knowing at Program Start & Finish**
Bill	Male/Late 40s	United States	Instrumental [2 to 2(3)] Δ
Helena	Female/Late 40s	West Africa	Socializing/Instrumental Transition [3/2 – 3/2]
Christopher	Male/Late 30s	Caribbean	**Socializing**/Self-Authoring Transition, emphasis here is on Socializing way of knowing [3/4 – 3/4]
Daniel	Male/Late 40s	West Africa	Socializing/**Self-Authoring** Transition, emphasis here is on Self-Authoring way of knowing [3/4 to 4/3] Δ
Jeff	Male/Late 40s	United States	Self-Authoring [4 – 4]

Instrumental Way of Knowing: Bill

Previously, we discussed Bill's orientation toward the cohort as a place where his ideas could be compared to those of other people, where others would form an audience in front of whom to talk, and where others provided the active learning environment he enjoyed so much more than a teacher-centered class. Notably, Bill—and Renada, the other participant making meaning with this way of knowing—did not talk very much about feeling *emotionally* supported by people in his cohort. This may be because a person with an Instrumental way of knowing does not orient to an *internal* or emotional life. Support is felt and understood in more concrete ways, such as help with homework, friendly encouragement, and/or help pronouncing words correctly.

Instrumental/Socializing Transitional Way of Knowing: Helena

> So she tell me, "Oh Helena, I think I gonna leave." I say, "Don't, don't, don't!" I say, "Keep going!" I say, "Try, try, try, you gonna make!" So when they almost done I say, "See, you have to try. If you don't try, you don't gonna make it." All the time I say, "Don't quit. I know it's hard, but try." (PI #1, p. 2)

In this transition, when both an Instrumental and a Socializing way of knowing are operating, learners began to comment on the ways the cohort offered emotional support that facilitated their success in the program. Learners making meaning in this transition often have both an orientation toward the concrete understanding of the Instrumental way of knowing and an increasing understanding and internalization of the perspectives of other people or social forces. Helena's case offers an excellent example of the way in which those in this transition make good use of the interpersonal support the cohort offered.

Helena, who was in her late 40s when we first met her, emigrated from West Africa in the late 1960s. She was a mother to two children in their early 20s. Helena's first language was Portuguese. From a family of 12 siblings, Helena had several relatives in the Boston area. In West Africa, she was able to attend school until the eighth grade; she sadly told us that in her home country, most women were not able to go to school beyond elementary school. It had been her wish for a long time to continue her education—and she felt strongly about having her children do the same.

The cohort was important enough to Helena that she spontaneously talked about it during the last interview, mentioning the group as a contributor to her "good time" in the class:

> I tell you, we had a good time, and we very good group people, too . . . because we learn, like if I don't understand something, if that person know, they told me, or if I know, I told them. So we work together.

Her orientation in this quotation was not to reflect upon the various forms of *emotional* support she and her classmates gave one another; rather, she stated that they are "very good group people" as a fact, explaining that being a good group of people is a positive kind of exchange in which whoever holds the information shares it with the others. This orientation might be primarily Instrumental (as the relationships in the group are used for specific and instrumental purposes), but there is more to Helena's understanding of the group process than the specific information she might gain.

Helena was also interested in offering forms of emotional support to her colleagues without discussing the personal benefits of such an offering, a value she brought to her CEI Adult Diploma Program experience. She demonstrated this in the first interview, in which she reflected on the advice she gave a cousin who had gone through the program a previous year:

> So she tell me, "Oh Helena, I think I gonna leave." I say, "Don't, don't, don't!" I say, "Keep going!" I say, "Try, try, try, you gonna make!" So when they almost done I say, "See, you have to try. If you don't try, you don't gonna make it." All the time I say, "Don't quit. I know it's hard, but try." (PI #1, p. 2)

We see Helena's orientation toward encouraging others through the sheer force of her positive attitude (instead of for particular reasons). Helena discussed the advice she gave to her cousin in a concrete way ("I know it's hard, but try").

At the same time, however, Helena demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing. She noticed connections between herself and others, cared about them, and offered them as important factors in her life in a way that Bill and Renada (who were more firmly making meaning with an Instrumental way of knowing) did not. At the end of her time in the CEI Adult Diploma Program class, Helena spoke of the support of her colleagues as vital to her success:

> Because we here like family. Especially me, I am very close to my family, very close to my family, so here everybody friend. I think because we got along good. We got along very, very good. So, we never have any problem, like upset somebody, or talk about somebody.

Helena's orientation to the group as a family suggests her Socializing way of knowing. That she described what she meant by "family" ("here everybody friend," everyone "got along good," people didn't talk about one another) demonstrates a more advanced ability to be reflective about things (i.e., what it means to be family). Yet the features defining "family" still seem fairly concrete—people get along well and do not upset one another. The cohort met these needs for Helena and increased her comfort level and ability to accomplish her goals. As a holding environment, the cohort became a place where people were kind to one another and encouraged each other through the many difficulties of the program and the challenges of balancing the multiple responsibilities of their adult lives.

Socializing Way of Knowing: Christopher

> We've been very respectful, too. So we learn to do that because we're not kids. We are adults, so we not make fun of people by saying stuff like if they don't know what to say, we polite. So we do appreciate each other. I will miss everybody after the class. And then I will hope, I really hope . . . we can still keep in contact. I mean contact, you know, calling each other, you know, things like that, to see how . . . we doing, you know. (PI #4, pp. 13–14)

For people who are Socializing knowers, there is less orientation toward the external facts of a situation and more toward an internal sense of things, an internal experience of the thoughts and ideas of others. Learners with this way of knowing will usually understand and make use of the cohort's interpersonal supports in different ways.

Originally from the Caribbean, Christopher was in his late 30s and had been in the United States for more than 10 years when we first met him. Christopher's teenage son lived in his home country, and his infant daughter lived in the United States. Christopher was highly motivated to get his diploma and saw education as "more important than money . . . It's like a key, I can open the door with a
diploma. . . . After I get it, I can decide what to do."

The cohort was helpful to Christopher's learning but in a very different way than for Helena. While Helena spoke mostly about how her cohort colleagues encouraged her to stay in the program, Christopher, when talking about how helpful the cohort was to him, spoke mostly about the way the members interacted with one another:

> So, we not make fun of people by saying stuff like if they don't know what to say, we polite. So we do appreciate each other. I will miss everybody after the class. And then I will hope, I really hope . . . we can still keep in contact. I mean contact, you know, calling each other, you know, things like that, to see how . . . we doing, you know. (PI #4, pp. 13–14)

For Christopher, the cohort was not a group of people who might offer one another particular, concrete supports (such as advice about staying in the program). The cohort instead offered a way of being in relationship with one another, of giving an abstract level of support, and of accepting each other. Together, they created a safe place where they didn't "make fun of people."

To explain that this was not just a serious group, though, Christopher pointed out in February 1999, "But we are having fun. People are teasing a little bit, but with respect, you know what I mean. So, there wasn't any confusion about that." The group's atmosphere, rather than a single element, felt supportive to Christopher. They were a learning group, had fun together, and were polite to one another. If Christopher were farther along in the transition to the Self-Authoring way of knowing, he might have been able to step back from this perspective and offer a glimpse at the larger enterprise in which they were all engaged.

Socializing and Self-Authoring Transitional Way of Knowing: Daniel

> Because of being so long, not real long, long, if you look, 18 months, it meets every, twice a week, two hours together, we study, we share the problems, we help each other, then we become good friends. . . . Like I said, it's like family, you have all the confidence in each other. If you don't know something, we help each other, we don't make fun of, we don't show, I know better than you, you know better than me. That's why I can tell, everybody meet together, become like a family.

Daniel, born in the late 1940s, emigrated from his home country in West Africa to the United States more than 20 years ago. He and his wife were foster parents to two preschool-age children who lived in their home and also had two young-adult children (one in his late teens and the other in her early 20s) who did not live with them. At home, Daniel spoke Portuguese, Creole, and English.

Daniel worked as a lead technician at Polaroid. One of the 10 learners from a the same home country in West Africa, Daniel became a leader in the cohort, supporting his colleagues and giving constructive feedback to his teachers about how they might best meet the learning needs of the group. His relationship to the group changed enormously during the program, from being "strange" and uncertain to providing strong interpersonal supports.

As Christopher did, Daniel focused a great amount of his attention on the atmosphere of the group. Also like Christopher (and others making meaning at the Socializing way of knowing), Daniel found the lack of conflict in the group vital to his comfort level. Daniel had an additional layer to his sense of the group's support though, like Helena, he thought the group was "like a family" and, like Christopher, he thought they were "nice with each other" and focused on the fact that they "don't make fun of each other."

When describing his introduction to the cohort in his final interview, Daniel reflected on the way the relationships among the Polaroid students grew and changed over time:

> [At first] it was kind of strange, because we didn't know most, or all of them. You don't know exactly how we gonna deal with each other. It's not because we don't want to be nice with each other, but you kind of different, because you don't know how each other gonna react. In terms of like know, a lot of people might have good backgrounds and you don't know which stage you . . . fit, sometimes you kinda feel uncomfortable, because in the beginning, if you make a mistake, and things like that. But after a while, it's nice because we all, since then, we all understand that we all here for one thing, to learn. It's the reason we here, because we didn't know, or we didn't have that high school diploma. And so, it work out nice. Because we turn out, that's why I say, we turn out like a kid. We don't make fun of each other, because I can make mistake today, tomorrow you may make one too. That was the impression that I had.

Daniel shared that after a while he began to feel comfortable with the other students, "it's like a family." At the end of the program, he attributed this new comfort to the time they spent together and the help they offered, and he went on to explain what it meant to be like a family:

> Because of being so long, not real long, long, if you look, 18 months, it meets every, twice a week, two hours together, we study, we share the problems, we help each other, then we become good friends. . . . Like I said, it's like family, you have all the confidence in each other. If you don't know something, we help each other, we don't make fun of, we don't show, I know better than you, you know better than me. That's why I can tell, everybody meet together, become like a family. (PI #4, 6-7)

The differences between Daniel's use of the interpersonal supports of the cohort and those of Christopher and Helena are subtle but important. Daniel, who may be better able to reflect on and discuss his thoughts about the reasons for the interpersonal things he noticed, explained what it meant to be "like family."

We found out that Daniel's conception of family was far less concrete than Helena's; it was an image of people who "have all the confidence in each other," who "help one another." He even gave specifics about *how* that process happened—meeting together often over time, studying together, learning together, and helping one another. In this transition when both the Socializing and Self-Authoring ways of knowing are operating, Daniel shared Helena's feelings about the cohort but at a different level, a level that allowed for *reflection* upon his feelings and an *examination* of the roots and importance of those feelings.

Daniel also shared Christopher's sense of the importance of the respect and lack of conflict in the group as a central feature, demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing. While people at any developmental stage might dislike conflict, those making meaning with a Socializing way of knowing often find conflict with people or ideas with which they identify particularly difficult. For learners making meaning primarily with a Socializing way of knowing, their orientation may be to avoid conflict for its own sake, to feel conflict as a breach in vital relationships that quite literally tears them apart. Moving toward the Self-Authoring way of knowing, however, enables a person to have perspective on feelings about conflict and see the goal of group harmony not as an end in itself but as a means toward some greater end.

Unlike Christopher, Daniel offered a goal larger than simply that the lack of conflict defined the group as a good one. For Daniel, both the lack of conflict *and* the group's common goals made them cohere. He said,

> It's nice because we all, since [the beginning of the class] we all understand that we all here for one thing, to learn. It's the reason we here, because we didn't know, or we didn't have that high school diploma.

This cohort provided a strong holding environment for Daniel, as it did for Christopher and Helena, by meeting his needs at his level and creating an environment where he and other learners with different ways of knowing felt well held—in a psychological sense.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing: Jeff

> Being in the class environment . . . it makes you feel better. You get the reward. You able to see other . . . people's faces when you've done something, and you've got it right. Same with them, when they've done something. They got it right, you know. You can see other people, and you know that—hey, yeah, we're doing it.

> We're getting it down.

Jeff, the only person at the Polaroid site who had a fully Self-Authoring way of knowing, was, like Daniel, a leader in the cohort. Earlier, we discussed Jeff's role as a leader and protector of cohort members. In his protector role, Jeff looked out for the learning needs of the others. In this section, we will show how Jeff experienced the supportive and challenging "push" by working with other cohort members. As stated previously, Jeff was able to reflect on how learning with members of the cohort was helpful to him. Here, we will elaborate on how the "process" of learning with others was a source of encouragement for Jeff.

Unlike many of his colleagues, Jeff oriented to the more abstract, psychological supports he and other cohort members were given. Like Helena, Jeff noticed connections between himself and others, cared about those connections, and offered them as important factors in his learning life. However, unlike Helena, Jeff reflected on what these relationships meant to him in a more abstract way. His Self-Authoring capacity enabled him to have a bigger perspective on the complexity of the larger learning enterprise in which all cohort members were engaged. Like Daniel, who demonstrates a Socializing and Self-Authoring ways of knowing, Jeff reflected upon his feelings and examined the roots and importance of those feelings. However, unlike Daniel, lack of conflict was not a prerequisite for Jeff's comfort in interacting with others. He did not experience conflict as a threat to his sense of cohesion with the group.

Jeff did not bring up conflict as a prerequisite to his enjoyment of the group, but it was clear he took joy in his classmates' successes as well as his own. In our last meeting with Jeff (June 1999), he explained,

> Being in the class environment . . . it makes you feel better. You get the reward. You able to see other . . . people's faces when you've done something, and you've got it right. Same with them, when they've done something. They got it right, you know. You can see other people, and you know that—hey, yeah, we're doing it. We're getting it down. . . . It gives you that little push, when you got other people working with you and around you, and stuff like that.

When Jeff discussed how "being in the class environment makes you feel better," he referred to his being able to experience "the reward" of not only "seeing other people's faces when" *he* did something "right" but also being able to share in the joy of knowing when others—his classmates in this case—did something well. Both gave Jeff a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction. Rather than constructing doing something right in terms of "the right answer" Jeff referred to being "right" in terms of demonstrating an understanding of a concept and understanding the *process* in contrast to following a rule.

Although Jeff stated that it made him "feel better" to be in a classroom environment and admitted that this was *a* motivator, it was not *the* main source of Jeff's motivation (as it might be if he constructed his experiences from a Socializing way of knowing). Jeff demonstrates a Self-Authoring meaning system in that he was motivated by his own set of values and beliefs. Another example of this was discussed previously when Jeff took a stand with John, the math teacher, on behalf of the class and himself. In that example, Jeff's internal values moved him to talk with John. He reminded John to take into account that the other adult learners in the class have additional responsibilities which may prohibit them from being able to do all John wanted them to do in terms of homework. In this example, Jeff seemed guided by his internally generated values to take a stand on behalf of the cohort. Jeff was able to take a larger perspective on his experience in the classroom and step back from it so he could reflect on it. Jeff had his own sense of (or theory about) what made learning happen for himself and for others. Part of it involved leaving what he referred to as his "adult" worries or concerns outside the classroom to concentrate on his school work. Leaving his adult responsibilities outside the classroom allowed him to "clear" his mind and focus on the task at hand.

Jeff experienced working with cohort members as an encouraging support and reflected on how this was helpful—he valued the *process* because he felt it was effective, challenging, and supportive—not only for his own learning but also for other people's learning. Jeff had sophisticated and complex ideas about how and why the process of working in a group was helpful and supportive: "It give[s] you that little push when you got other people working with you and around you." Although the group gave Jeff the "push," he seemed to experience it internally. This passage demonstrates Jeff's construction of how the cohort encouraged him and also shows his capacity to have a perspective on the process of group work. He *knew* what he thought about group work, he could reflect on his own perspective about it and why he thought it was effective and supportive to his own and other people's learning. For Jeff, it was the *process* of working with others that was supportive and encouraging. He valued it because of its benefits for himself and other members of the cohort.

Jeff's reasoning was his own and not influenced by an external authority as it would be if he were a Socializing knower. His focus was on the common goals the cohort shared. As a Self-Authoring knower, Jeff constructed conflict as a natural part of learning from and working with others—not as a threat to his self. Working with other cohort members created a supportive holding environment for Jeff in which he received and gave support.

In this section, we have examined how adults who made meaning at a variety of developmental positions experienced the cohort as a supportive and encouraging holding environment. This cohort provided a strong holding environment for Jeff and Daniel—as it did for Christopher and Helena—by meeting their different needs for support and challenge. The cohort created an environment in which people who make meaning across a range of ways of knowing could be well held and encouraged.

SECTION IV: "I HAVE A BETTER APPRECIATION FOR PEOPLE": THE COHORT AS A HOLDING ENVIRONMENT FOR PERSPECTIVE BROADENING

> When they [other cohort members from other countries] read their life stories, it was kind of, you could see the struggle some of them had, how they come here and met their husbands and met their wives. . . . I never thought about people [like that] before. I never thought about foreigners. To me, stop the flow at the border, you know, but what would have happened if a hundred years ago, they stopped my family from coming in, stuff like that. (Bill, Instrumental knower)

In this section, we will show how the cohort served as an enduring and sustaining holding environment for growth, challenging and supporting adults who made sense of their experiences in developmentally different ways. While the cohort supported academic learning and provided emotional encouragement, we focus here on how interpersonal interactions with cohort members helped learners develop their capacity for perspective taking. Sharing ideas through dialogue and writing challenged and supported learners to broaden their perspectives, regardless of their underlying meaning-making system.

Through group work, learners were invited to identify their assumptions and at times their very ways of thinking, which provided a space for them to reflect on themselves as learners. Engaging with others in groups over time *challenged* adults in the cohort to experiment with and enact new ways of thinking and behaving, thereby broadening their perspectives. By working in groups, learners were invited to name aspects of their own thinking and assumptions, which provides a space for individuals to become more aware of the thinking guiding their behaviors. Collaboration with other adults in the cohort often became a catalyst for growth. Learning in the cohort group encouraged adults to become more aware of and share their own perspectives and to widen their perspectives by listening to and considering other people's outlooks. We develop this argument by presenting case examples (see Table 5) illustrating how the same activity, namely group learning in the cohort over an extended period of time, became a space for transformation or a powerful holding environment—spacious enough to hold and challenge a wide range of learners, regardless of their underlying meaning system, as they broadened their perspectives.

Table 5: Cases for Illustrating the Cohort as a Holding Environment for Challenging and Supporting Perspective Broadening

Name	Gender/Age at Program's Start	Region Of Origin	Way Of Knowing at Program Start & Finish
Bill	Male/Late 40s	United States	Instrumental [2 to 2(3)] Δ
Hope	Female/Late 50s	Caribbean	Instrumental/Socializing Transition [2/3 to 3/2] Δ
Rita	Female/Early 40s	West Africa	Socializing [3/2 to 3] Δ
Daniel	Male/Late 40s	West Africa	Socializing/Self-Authoring Transition [3/4 to 4/3] Δ
Jeff	Male/Late 40s	United States	Self-Authoring [4 – 4]

Instrumental Way of Knowing

Bill's Case

> I just know I see them in a different light, people from other countries, than I did before. To me, they were just invaders. Not invaders, I shouldn't have said that. You know, I don't know what I mean. Just to see them and actually talk to them and hear their life stories, and most of them struggling coming up. . . . I'm just trying, I ain't got the right words . . . I have a better appreciation for people who come from poor countries and Third World countries.

Earlier in this chapter, we introduced Bill, one of two native-born Americans in the cohort. When Bill first began the CEI class, he said remarkably little about his fellow students, except to speculate that the "foreigners" in the cohort might struggle with learning, given their limited English proficiency. Nonetheless, Bill grew to enjoy the opportunity to talk in small and large learning groups and felt confident that talking helped him learn.

Bill's perspective on other cohort members shifted radically over the course of the program. He connected this change to his experience of hearing other people's "Life Stories" presented as part of an assignment for the Life Employment Workshop during the final trimester. The Life Employment Workshop also focused on helping learners develop and build skills that would be helpful in terms of job advancement both within and outside Polaroid. Learning activities in this class included developing a cover letter and creating a resume. This class was especially important to these learners, they said, because of the recent layoffs at Polaroid and the current job uncertainty many of them were experiencing about their futures there.

For the "Life Stories" exercise, learners invested considerable time conceptualizing and writing personal narratives, which they then shared with the entire cohort through oral presentations during the final weeks of the trimester. Cohort members worked independently at home and in class—in small writing groups—sharing ideas about their writing and receiving feedback from each other and from their teacher, Judith. Many of Bill's colleagues recounted their experiences of immigration, telling what it was like to leave their families behind with the hope of finding a richer life in the United States. Several presenters and many of us in the room were moved to tears as we listened to heartfelt accounts of new beginnings and the pursuit of "golden opportunities" that would bring rewards to themselves and their families.

Bill felt deeply affected by the other learners' "Life Stories." In fact, he identified this experience as the most meaningful for his learning because it "tugged at [his] heartstrings" and compelled him to see his classmates differently.

> When they [other cohort members from other countries] read their life stories, it was kind of, you could see the struggle some of them had, how they come here and met their husbands and met their wives . . . I never thought about people [like that] before? I never thought about foreigners. To me, stop the flow at the border, you know, but what would have happened if a hundred years ago, they stopped my family from coming in, stuff like that.

Bill was beginning to recognize limitations of his former perspective. He admitted, "I never thought about people [like that] before. I never thought about foreigners." When Bill considered immigration issues in the past, he was limited in his perspective, unable to see beyond his own experience. Although his grandfather was born in Italy and did not speak much English, Bill, before listening to his classmates' stories, did not see connections between his classmates and himself, he told us. What he learned from other people *transformed* his thinking about himself, his own family of origin, and people from other countries.

The opportunity to learn alongside other cohort members challenged and enabled Bill to begin to think very differently about his classmates and about immigrants in general. He explained,

> I just know I see them in a different light, people from other countries, than I did before. To me, they were just invaders. Not invaders, I shouldn't have said that. You know, I don't know what I mean. Just to see them and . . . actually talk to them and hear their life stories, and most of them struggling coming up. . . . I'm just trying, I ain't got the right words . . . I have a better appreciation for people who come from poor countries and third world countries.

By coming to know others in the group whose backgrounds were starkly different from his own, Bill grew much better able to understand and empathize with their experiences. Toward the end of the program, Bill realized that many members of the cohort come from "poor countries, these ain't big-money countries, and these people grew up on farms and barefoot." With this newfound understanding about the hardship in his classmates' past lives, Bill was able to recognize and applaud their accomplishments: "They're successful now, just maintaining jobs in America for all these years." This passage marks a profound shift in perspective for Bill. He began to empathize with those who are different from him and saw ways they were alike. Instead of seeing those who were different as completely other, completely separate from him (as he did during the first interviews), Bill both respected them for their accomplishments and put himself in their shoes, demonstrating a newly evolving sense of empathy for and identification with others. Notably, Bill felt grateful to other members of his cohort for helping him learn about their lives and challenging his thinking. Reflecting on his changed perspective, he said, "I just feel a lot of, I don't know, gratitude to meet them all and to learn about different things, different things about their countries."

While Bill noted a shift in his thinking about his classmates in particular and immigrants in general, he was not yet able to express how this broadened perspective *felt*. Bill struggled to find words to convey his experience, sometimes revising his own statements, restarting sentences, or uttering "I don't know"; these speech patterns were virtually absent when Bill discussed other topics. We interpret the stumbling in Bill's speech as evidence that trying to reflect on his emotions brought Bill to an edge in his thinking: He began to bring others' experiences into the ways he knew and thought about his own life. We suspect that with continued support and challenge, like that which he experienced in this cohort, Bill would likely grow into this capacity as well.

This is only one experience that helped Bill take a bigger perspective on his own and other people's life experiences. The cohort served as a transitional space, holding Bill as he began to explore his own thinking and challenging and supporting him as he developed and broadened his capacity for perspective taking.

Instrumental/Socializing Transitional Way of Knowing

Hope's Case

> We wrote about our parents [in the "Life Stories" exercise], what they, what . . . values that they taught us. . . . There were things that the group said that . . . although they were from different, other countries, you could see that they were the same values. They may speak a different language, but you could see that it was the same values. . . . Although . . . the parents never knew each other, we have some of the same values.

Like Bill, Hope described the "Life Stories" sharing exercise as a powerful learning experience that broadened her perspective in lasting ways. Hope made sense of this learning differently, however, in part because she had a Socializing way of knowing alongside the Instrumental way of knowing that characterizes Bill's thinking.

After hearing fellow cohort members' life stories, Hope was able to see commonality where before she only saw difference. Hope previously assumed that immigrants from countries other than her homeland in the Caribbean had life experiences and world orientations very different than her own. She was surprised, then, to learn how much she shared with other members of the cohort. She explained,

> We had different cultures, but by listening to each other, it's not different. It's no different than—they [others in the cohort] may speak another language . . . but when you listen, they may say it in a different word . . . but to me, it was the same.

By listening to other people's stories, Hope's thinking was challenged. Her assumption that members of the group were separated from one another by cultural differences was immediately called into question, which became an invitation for Hope to expand her perspective.

Hope demonstrated a capacity for abstract thinking, a strength of the Socializing way of knowing, when she reflected on shared "values" among members of the cohort. Hope was able to see underlying messages in the group's life stories:

> We wrote about our parents, what they, what . . . values that they taught us. . . . There were things that the group said that . . . although they were from different, other countries, you could see that they were the same values. They may speak a different language, but you could see that it was the same values. . . . Although . . . the parents never knew each other, we have some of the same values.

Despite obvious differences in their life histories, Hope now understood that she and many other cohort members were united by core values their parents had instilled. Hope was able to see other adults in the program as similar to herself. While members of the group spoke different languages and came from very different cultures, they shared fundamental beliefs about how to live. Instead of seeing those from other countries as completely unlike her in terms of values, Hope could now see she shared values with cohort members who may be different from her in other ways. She had a newly developed respect for what she had in common with her classmates and articulated her new understanding. Even though other cohort members may have been from other countries, spoken different languages, and had parents who "never knew each other," she voiced a new awareness that her parents and other people's parents shared common values that they then transferred to their children. Hope's ability to recognize commonalties across the group enabled her to manage their differences, rather than feel threatened by them.

Remarkably, Hope was able to generalize her enhanced capacity for perspective taking beyond the classroom and into other domains of her life. She explained how learning made possible in the cohort was helping her at work:

> [Working with the cohort] made me understand people who I work with. Cause they're people I work with that's dyslexic. And make me think back. I wasn't dyslexic, but it make me think back. If I didn't go to this class, I wouldn't have the opportunity of helping them in some of the things they are, and a little bit more patience.

With the supportive holding environment of the cohort, Hope was increasingly able to take on other people's perspectives, and this ability to see a bigger world also helped her in her work life. For Hope, it seems that difference was okay because everyone was still connected and basically the same (a Socializing construction). She discussed all of this in a concrete context (an Instrumental construction).

The cohort served as a holding environment, a supportive space in which Hope's thinking was challenged and supported as she began to see and make sense of a bigger world. Hope had already expressed an empathy for her fellow cohort members that stemmed from knowing more about their lives. For example, she said, "Some of them speak three languages plus English. So, I give my hand to them. Because to learn in English plus what they have before, that's a lot." This capacity for empathy now extended to many others, such as adults with dyslexia at work, whose struggles came into view for Hope.

Socializing Way of Knowing

Rita's Case

> I might work part-time in another year after, 2000, because I want to, you know, when you go to school, you starting go to school . . . it's something that, it's like when you try to reach something that you put one footstool, then you couldn't reach that, you might say, let me go up on the ladder, I want to go one step at a time until I reach the top. When I start[ed] this program, I was low, low, low. And I took a course . . . when I passed the test for GED, I say, well, now is the time, when I saw this program and I said, 18 months is a long time. But I always think about the 18 months will be gone soon, and another 18 months is around the corner for me. You have to focus on your dream.

In this section we introduce Rita, who in her early 20s emigrated, alone, from her home country in West Africa to the United States. At the age of 12, Rita needed to leave school to help her parents run their household and earn money. Rita's mother insisted that young girls belong at home, not in school, although her father encouraged her never to give up on her goal of going to school. Now in her early

40s and with a husband and two elementary school-age children, Rita felt it was time to fulfill her lifelong "dream" of an education.

The CEI Adult Diploma Program and its cohort served as a dynamic holding environment for Rita, supporting and challenging her as she developed the capacity to envision new possibilities for herself and her future, thus broadening her perspective. Although Rita was laid off from her position in Polaroid's Camera Division during the second trimester of the program, she remained astoundingly hopeful about her career prospects and opportunities for continued learning. In this section, we will highlight how Rita's capacity for perspective expanded as she began to envision new possibilities for herself and her future.

Rita derived tremendous motivation from her "dream" of earning an American high school diploma. For most of her life, Rita felt stifled by her mother's charge that she go to work instead of school. Rita now saw the diploma as her chance to "move on with life."

> That was my dream all this year that I worked for Polaroid. . . . I always talked to my supervisor about someday I have to go to school until I get graduated. Someday I have to become an American graduate, you know? So they had this program. Last year I couldn't take it because my daughter, she has knee injuries and she was on an off from the hospital. It was hard for me. But this year, [it was] so nice, [there were] fliers that we stamped here to go out, and I took one, and I pulled it out, and I told my supervisor, what do you think of this one? She said, "[I'll] sign it." . . . Now it is time to start. Move on with the life. (PI #1, p. 1)

In the metaphor of Rita's life, it is as if she has been resting on the side of the road, waiting for her journey to begin again. When she passed the CEI assessment test, Rita said to herself, "This is my first step." With the start of this program, she was finally able to get back to her "dream."

In the first interview, Rita talked about wishing "life could turn around," so that she could capitalize on newfound opportunities in the United States by prioritizing her schooling. Given her regrets and resentment about restricted choices in her adolescence, we are impressed by Rita's forward orientation; she was focused on future possibilities, the different careers she could pursue and the classes she could take to enhance her knowledge. Like many other cohort members, she believed "it is never too late to learn."

Her role as worker also seemed to influence her desire and need to learn more because, like many in the cohort, she felt that education would give her enhanced opportunities for job advancement. Although it was unfortunate she lost her job at Polaroid, she reframed this event as a welcomed opportunity to focus on her education. Such a hopeful, powerful word—"dream"—speaks to Rita as a person, how she constructed her experience, what she was about in the world, and the ways in which the diploma program helped her *see and believe in new possibilities for herself.* In important ways, Rita was at a phase in her life in which she was following her dreams—she wanted to do this for herself and her children. Rita wanted her children to be proud of her and to pursue their own education, and she felt that she would set a good example by earning her high school diploma.

Before beginning the program (February 1998), Rita did not articulate any career goals at all, except the certain knowledge that she wanted to go to college.

> [My] second step I will see you in U Mass . . . If I graduate [from the program], believe it or not, if I'm still healthy, if everything is still okay, you know, there is no sickness around. You know I don't have many problems, like physical or no mentally, I will go to college. . . . I don't know yet [what she will study in college]. But I wait until I get my diploma. That is the first step I want to move on. I will. Someday. (PI #1, pp. 1–2)

In the second through fourth interviews (September 1998–June 1999), Rita mentioned three different career options: nurse, computer programmer, and medical assistant. The fact that Rita contemplated three different job options over the course of the final three interviews seems important in light of her earlier comments about job opportunities in this country: "As long as someone encourages you, you can become a lawyer, a doctor, a manager." In the diploma program, she experienced the cohort's and teacher's encouragement as important developmental supports that enabled her to explore options. Contemplating career options suggests Rita had developed a perspective on the versatility of her abilities and talents—and had a developing capacity to envision expanded opportunities for her future. In Rita's view, her interactions with cohort members in the Polaroid program and members of our research team made these options seem more viable.

We notice, however, that she did not talk about a progression of goals (e.g., "I used to want to be X but now I've learned more about it, and I want to be Y"). Instead, Rita talked about each career goal as a distinct entity in itself, a "dream" that sounded lifelong but changed from interview to interview. It seems that each of these goals motivated her to stay engaged with learning in important ways. The teaching practice of encouraging learners to consider a variety of goals might, in our view, help learners articulate goals which then might help them stay in ABE programs. This will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

In February 1999, Rita told us about how grateful she felt for the chance to learn.

> Thanks to Polaroid, they come up with this program and thank all of you [our research team] that help us [the cohort] **that make us—ourselves change**. This is a big chance for us because we are adult. We have to work every day to survive and then to go to school, to have high school diploma is not easy. If I wasn't at Polaroid, believe it or not, I would never have my high school diploma. **But things will change**. (PI #3, p. 5)

Rita knew that more schooling was required to realize her career goals; "I have to go to school for what I am to be." Also in this interview (during the program's third trimester), Rita described how she bought a computer and had been practicing typing. This experience of learning to use computers in the CEI Adult Diploma Program seemed to open up the possibility for Rita that she could be a computer programmer, thus broadening her perspective on future possibilities. When asked during this interview about what she would like to be, Rita replied,

> I want to be computer programmer, and I want to go to school to learn that, and now I start learning little by little but it's different because it's [the class] only an hour and a half. It's not enough. But if I go full-time, then I know it's different. Because I love work on the computer, and this year I bought myself a computer, and I practice at home. Now I start learning how to typing, which is something that I

> used to love, but I didn't have no computer, and I don't want to go somebody's house and say, can I use your computer, your typewriter? No, and I say, "Well, sometime God is good: He close one door, and He open up five doors." (PI #3, p. 8)

In the last interview, when Rita spoke about her "dream" she was able to take a bigger perspective on how earning her high school diploma was a step toward the bigger dreams she had for herself. In response to an interviewer's question about why it would feel good to be able to answer questions posed to her, she offered:

> *To be myself* . . . It's like when you see the mirror in front of you, you see yourself. It's exactly what I'm right now. I see myself walking with my cap and gown with my diploma in my hand, and that makes me feel so proud, and that makes me feel I hope, and I wish, someday I have a job in the future to go to different schools to teach kids how to survive. How to go to school, how to prepare themselves for the future. Because you know, sometimes you see kids 14, 15, 16 years old, they think they know everything, but they don't know nothing. You have to have experience in life to have to succeed your goals, you have to see your dreams in your future. Well some people think I know how to write my name, that's okay. If anybody ask me for a signature, I'll do it. But it's not a thing beyond that. [*I have a picture in my head of you walking across the stage getting your diploma.*] That's the beginning.

One of the hallmarks of Rita's development is her articulation of her career goals over time and the ways in which the program—as a dynamic holding environment for growth—helped her envision new possibilities and expand her perspective about future career options.

Not only did the program help Rita to broaden her perspective, working with cohort members provided a safe holding environment that supported and held Rita as she took risks toward being able to express herself in new ways. Rita told us she finally felt able to express herself and imagine new possibilities for her life, "see [her] dreams in [her] future." For Rita, becoming educated, learning the language, being able to "answer someone back" meant *to be able to be herself.* It is as if she was able to reclaim herself through her learning, to set her self free. Rita not only broadened her perspective during the program, but also began to see the real possibility for realizing her dreams and for being herself—all as a result of learning with members of the cohort, being in the program, and earning her diploma. This is a powerful statement and experience—to be able to engage with other people and the world after so many years of being imprisoned by the inability to communicate, to be able to see the possibility in life that before was out of reach, to be able to have a perspective on how earning an adult diploma was a step toward making bigger dreams a reality.

Socializing/Self-Authoring Transitional Way of Knowing

Daniel's Case

> We know we're all grownups in there. So we don't be afraid to ask a simple question, what it is or how this works or something like that. Where otherwise if you're not in the school, if I didn't take this course, I would say, "Oh, it's a small

> word but I'm not going to ask people what kind of word is this." But in the school, we're all in there for one thing, to learn better. (PI #3, p. 14)

Earlier in this chapter, we introduced Daniel, a lead technician at Polaroid who emigrated from his home country in West Africa and who had worked at Polaroid for 20 years. When Daniel first began the CEI program, he felt "anxious" about his ability to balance the demands of being in the program and working full-time. Initially, Daniel said he felt "uncomfortable" about making mistakes. During the program, Daniel's perspective on making mistakes shifted dramatically as he grew more "comfortable" with other cohort members and also as he gained a different perspective on the *value* of making mistakes.

In our final two interviews with Daniel, we noticed his earlier perspective on being "scared" and "afraid" about making mistakes had changed. At this time, he talked about feeling "scared" on behalf of the whole class (demonstrating both a concern for, and possibly embeddedness in, their experience as well as an ability to take a perspective on the cohort's experience). At the same time, he focused on his own feelings about his learning and the changes he noticed in himself about his feelings as a learner. Daniel responded to a question about a "meaningful learning experience" he had in the program by talking about what it was like for the class as they approached the end of the program:

> Meaningful? I think right now is the time when everybody is excited because you're getting to the end. . . . You can see the end is coming. And I think most of us, we really enjoy it. And I also started encouraging some more coworkers [to enroll]. . . . That's one of the feelings, I feel more exciting because I can see something, in the beginning sometimes you be scared, you don't know when you get into it if you're going to be able to learn something. We don't know, I don't know how it was like before I get into it. But right now we can speak more clearly, we can be able to speak with each other. Like in the beginning we [were] kind of scared. (PI #3, p. 4)

Daniel described how he personally did not know what the program would be like initially, and that was scary, a feeling that Daniel believed he shared with others in his cohort. He also spoke of his feelings about wanting to complete academic tasks "properly."

Importantly, in this third interview, he highlighted a change in his perspective and his feelings of trepidation. "When you start writing something . . . I like to do it properly, but I'm scared. But I feel comfortable with this right now or more less." At this point, Daniel accepted and understood why he felt uncomfortable and was able to have a perspective on feeling afraid and comfortable around his writing skills:

> Yes. That's why I was thinking also what happened with the people like me, I come over here, there are more people that come over with more education also which is more advanced. . . . I see a lot of people that they're writing comfortable, they're not scared to write now. They . . . write, you understand what they're saying but you're misspelling a lot. That's why I'm afraid. I like to do things, I like to do it properly. . . . That's why I think I should be comfortable with myself to write it down even if it's wrong and then I correct it later or something like that. (PI #3, p. 16)

Daniel compared himself to "people that come over with more education" meaning perhaps other immigrants who arrived in the U.S. with more schooling, or perhaps native English speakers in his company. At this point, he noticed that "they're writing comfortable, they're not scared to write," and he seemed to want to be like them. Daniel demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing and a concern for how others perceive him, in that he was afraid of looking less than competent in front of others. At the same time, he had his own values and standards for completing tasks "properly." Wanting to do things "properly" seems to refer to wanting to meet his internally generated expectations for writing. He shared his newly developed perspective that it was okay to make mistakes and to correct these as he engaged in learning.

In the last interview, Daniel recalled how he felt scared as the beginning of the program and how his perspective changed:

> From the beginning, that was kind of little tough, the English part, you have to write in the beginning. That was my most difficult, because I always have trouble writing. **It's not because I don't know how to write, I can write a few things, but I'm afraid to make mistakes**. I found out in the end, . . . I was thinking, that was before, because probably in the beginning when I came to this country I was trying to speak English, so I can get a better job and communicate. I bought a, an English course which you hear, you read, and you understand English, and you forget about writing. And I was thinking that's the reason why I didn't write, **I was kind of scared to write, to make mistake**. So I, when I was in English class, that was very helpful. [*Do you feel that way now?*] Oh no. No, not after I write all those things. . . . **Because I gained a lot experience. We wrote a lot. Then I learn how to correct myself**. (PI #4, p. 3)

Daniel's fear could stem from a fear of looking incompetent in front of others (a Socializing construction), and/or he may personally value high-quality work (a Self-Authoring construction). Importantly, Daniel did not implicate other people in his reasons for feeling scared or not. In fact, his reason for not feeling scared anymore is derived from his own experience and abilities (a Self-Authoring capacity) rather than from the reassurance of his teachers or colleagues (a Socializing perspective).

Daniel had gained some distance from his anxiety-ridden experiences and could now understand how others (other immigrant adults coming to the U.S. for the first time) may have had similar emotions. When Daniel said, "There is never a stupid question. And that encouraged me a lot. If you are really not scared, you can [learn]," it shows his newly developed perspective, which gave him freedom from this kind of fear and enabled him to learn. Daniel's clarity about what he wanted—"to make it comfortable to myself and start learning"—suggests his ability to evaluate himself. He expanded on his new perspective when he talked about how he will be as a learner in future courses:

> Which, if I am going to be taking another course or something like that, **I will be feel more comfortable asking questions, things like that**. It has helped me a lot. **There is something, there is a step that you** [have to take] . . . **you don't be afraid to ask people questions**. Like the teacher is comfortable and it's a good thing we work together. We know we're all grown ups in there. **So we don't be**

> **afraid to ask a simple question, what it is or how this works or something like that.** Where otherwise if you're not in the school, if I didn't take this course, I would say, "Oh, it's a small word but I'm not going to ask people what kind of word is this." But in the school, we're all in there for one thing, to learn better. (PI #3, p. 14)

The cohort served as a safe place that challenged and supported Daniel as he broadened his perspective on his own and on other people's learning processes. During the program, Daniel developed a perspective on his feelings. Some of these feelings he made his own ("I haven't had the courage") and some he ascribed to others ("They're scared to speak up"). Some feelings he shared with others (in the beginning, "we were afraid"). Daniel simultaneously owned his feelings and experienced himself as having the same feelings as others.

During the program, Daniel developed a new perspective on making mistakes; over time, he came to believe it was okay to make mistakes because he viewed mistakes as "opportunities" for learning. Daniel clearly stated this was not the way he thought about mistakes before he entered the program. The Self-Authoring part of his construction seems to be that Daniel at the end of the program realized he could be imperfect in other people's eyes—and he was able to risk being seen this way by others.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

Jeff's Case

One of two learners native to the United States, Jeff had enormous differences from many of the other members of the cohort—English was his first and only language, he grew up in the South, and he was schooled in the United States before dropping out in the eleventh grade. Although Jeff enrolled in the program to earn a high school diploma, he soon came to appreciate the value of his "multicultural" class. The only learner making sense of his experience in a fully Self-Authoring way of knowing, Jeff reflected sensitively on the ways in which working with other cohort members who were quite different from him in terms of their ethnicities, cultures, and family backgrounds helped him gain a broader perspective on himself and others.

For example, earlier in this chapter, we discussed how Jeff discovered he was able to learn from sharing what he knew with others and from the process of working with others in cohort learning groups. Jeff realized, through his work in small and large learning groups, that "everybody's learning is different," and he demonstrated the developmental capacity to have a perspective on the entire cohort's common purpose. His perspective was that the group was effective not only for his own learning but also for other people's learning. Jeff's thinking and sophisticated ideas about why working in a group was helpful and the ways in which his perspective broadened over time illustrate his Self-Authoring way of knowing.

In our third interview (February 1999), Jeff explained how his perspective on what it meant to be a member of a multicultural cohort had changed since the beginning of the program. At the start of the program, he worried that most of the other learners, who were immigrants, would slow his progress and the class because they needed help with the basics of grammar and pronunciation. However, Jeff's collaboration over time with the adults in this diverse group enabled him to broaden his perspective in significant ways.

For example, Jeff reflected on the experience of doing a research project assigned in science class. Jeff soon came to understand the other adults' struggles with English as a learning need rather than a liability to his own learning. He also began to recognize the implications of his classmates' prior learning experiences in a different educational system:

> Well, I think for me it was like he [the science teacher] gave us the things to do [in the science research project]. We all selected a title, a topic [to investigate on the Internet for the science project]. And then he'd [the teacher, John] give us directions on how to do it. . . . Most of the people in the class didn't understand [the teacher's directions]. That was because they are from another country. And the two [educational systems are] different, maybe the schoolings are different. Maybe because, you know, like I said, they are from another country. They don't grasp or understand the English language, so therefore, they can't, as fast.

To complete this science research project and report, each learner needed to understand the teacher's directions and to work both independently (e.g., conducting research on the Internet, writing sections of the report) and collaboratively in a small group (e.g., developing outlines and theses, providing constructive feedback on drafts). Jeff explained how he thought other members of the cohort from other countries were looking to him and Bill, the only two "Americans" to see if they would find the project's directions easier to understand because they were native English speakers. Jeff said,

> Now, we all worked in singles. But I think what it was, like, myself and Bill in the class, were the only two Americans. Everybody else was multicultural. So it's almost like I got the feeling that they were kind of looking at us—How much did they know? You know, the whole nine yards. [As if] I know no more than the rest of them do. But I kind of got the feeling that they expected us to know just a little bit more than they did. But when it comes down to it, we didn't know no more than the other person did.

After working with cohort members in these learning groups on this science report and in other classroom learning activities, Jeff realized the other group members thought he and Bill, knew more than the other multicultural members of the cohort because they were Americans. Jeff had the important capacity to see that others had different experiences and expectations of him than he did of himself. He also discussed how the other members of the cohort had important knowledge, ideas, and experiences to share with each other and with him. He reminded us, at the time of this third interview, of the example he shared earlier about learning the math concept of using the "x" to solve an algebraic equation.

> Basically, yes, I did. Yes. Like I said, everybody's learning is different. Everybody has different types of learning. And come to find out what they were doing, they [the "multicultural" cohort members] were applying these math skills that they had already learned in their country. They were trying to apply [them] to the American [way of doing math] and come to find out what John [the teacher] was saying, they were doing it, but they were doing it the way they were shown [in their

> home countries, and] coming up with the same answer [as Jeff and Bill]. . . . When me and Bill did it, we had this big long thing. We had the answer, but the problem was worked out. But yet, the way they did it, they had half of the problem, but their shortcuts were better. But they [the "multicultural" members of the cohort] had the same answer. So, John was saying, no, you have to do it the American way.

Jeff adopted a broader perspective on his own learning when he came to believe he could learn from the process of working with other cohort members who were different. He also developed a broader perspective on the process by which other members of the class needed to learn, especially because English was their second language. He decided to approach John and tell him that he was teaching sophisticated mathematical concepts in a way that was not working *for the class*. Jeff's awareness caused him to advocate on behalf of his classmates. Jeff told his teacher, "It's harder for them [the multicultural members of the class] to understand what you're saying. You have to explain yourself. You have to show them more details." Jeff articulated suggestions to John so John might be better able to facilitate the other students' learning. Jeff demonstrates the capacity to have a perspective on the struggles his classmates encounter. Interestingly, Jeff, a Self-Authoring knower, was the only learner in the program who raised this issue of the class's pedagogical needs as special because it was a "multicultural" class. This demonstrates how Jeff's perspective deepened over time and also his capacity to take a larger perspective on the situation.

During the third and fourth interviews, when Jeff reflected on his experience of being in a "multicultural class," he demonstrated his Self-Authoring capacity to take a metaperspective on and advocate for his views of teaching and step back from his own experience in the class. Having had the opportunity to work with other adult learners from a variety of countries helped Jeff broaden his perspective about what it means to him to be in a "multicultural" class and how people's learning needs differ. Additionally, he developed an appreciation for his fellow classmates' learning needs and how they influenced the learning process.

In the last interview (June 1999), Jeff explained more about how his perspective was broadened after being part of a "multicultural" class for the past 14 months. He shared his new and deeper understanding of what it meant to be a person who came to the United States as an adult learner in the CEI Adult Diploma Program. After being in the cohort, he had new appreciation for how his classmates must have struggled. The cohort served as a holding environment for Jeff, supporting and challenging his capacity for perspective taking.

Also in this last interview, Jeff reflected on another way his perspective broadened through participation in this diploma program. After working for Polaroid for many years and thoroughly enjoying and being fascinated by his work on machines, he was, for the first time, considering enrolling in a supervisor training course at Polaroid. Although he acknowledged a few reservations about the match between his personality and particular aspects of a supervisor's work, he was interested in exploring this career option. When asked whether the diploma program had helped him think differently about this possibility, Jeff explained,

> Yes. It has. Yeah. 'Cause they, Polaroid does, they do, from time to time, offer a course or program for, should I say low entry or low-level like, supervisors. Supervisors in training? Stuff like that, which, now, with this, you know, completing this [diploma program] course and doing all that, and retuning,

> sharpening my skills. I don't think I'd have a problem if they—[the] course came. I'd probably sign up for it. [*Jeff, you'd be a dynamite supervisor!*] . . . I just have . . . more things to learn about supervision, supervisors, and the upper echelons of the company. (PI #4, pp. 22–23)

Jeff was interested in taking the supervisor training course at Polaroid and realized that if he chose to pursue this leadership position, he would need to develop certain skills. At the same time, Jeff realized other aspects of the work would be harder for him, given his personality.

Jeff had a broader perspective about future career possibilities at this point, and he attributed his ability to consider such options to his participation in the diploma program. In the process of making his decision, Jeff demonstrates the capacity to articulate some of his own assumptions about supervisors' work and to reflect on whether or not he had what he considered the qualities needed for this kind of work. He realized that learning to interact with the "upper echelon" would be required of a supervisor. He recognized his need for learning in this area but was in the process of considering his feelings about this. Jeff was challenging some of his own assumptions about his work and reflecting on his own values. This is yet
another example of a way in which the program served as a dynamic holding environment supporting and challenging Jeff's way of knowing, thus broadening his vision of himself as worker.

In this section we illuminated how the cohort—and the interpersonal interactions cohort members had with each other—helped learners develop capacities for perspective taking. Sharing ideas through dialogue, writing, gently questioning, and listening to each others' experiences both challenged and supported learners to widen their perspectives, regardless of their underlying meaning-making systems.

Working closely with cohort members in general and especially in small collaborative groups created a context for reflection. Engaging with others in shared learning experiences over time enabled and *challenged* cohort learners to experiment with and enact new ways of thinking and behaving, thereby broadening their perspectives. Naming aspects of their own thinking, as we have shown, provided a space for learners to become more aware of the thinking that guided their behaviors. In these ways, the cohort served as a holding environment for learners that gently challenged and supported learners as they enhanced their capacities for perspective taking. Working with other cohort members over time often became a catalyst for growth.

We also have shown how three learners—Bill, Hope, and Jeff—made sense of the Life Stories exercise assigned during their final program trimester. Although all three found this a powerful learning experience, they made sense of the *same* experience and how it helped them broaden their perspective differently, through their individual underlying meaning system. This is a compelling example of how learning activities such as the Life Stories exercise can sufficiently accommodate learners making sense of their experience through different meaning systems. Bill, Hope, and Jeff show us that the Life Stories curriculum (which involved individual and collaborative conceptualizing, writing, reflecting, oral presenting, and listening) was transformational across gender, racial background, and way of knowing.

SECTION V: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, we have illustrated how learners experienced the cohort (a program design feature) and collaborative learning (a teacher practice). In doing so, we illuminated how sustained connection to fellow cohort members and learners' work in collaborative learning groups provided a robust holding environment that supported learners' academic development, emotional well-being, and cognitive development. Furthermore, we have illustrated the ways that learners with different ways of knowing experienced collaborative group learning and argued that these seem to mirror the goals Hamilton (1994) articulates for Trimbur's (1993) three models of collaborative learning. In this section, we discuss the implications of our work for program design and teacher practice.

The interplay between CEI's program structure and the teacher practice of using collaborative learning created opportunities for learners to share experiences, form interpersonal relationships, and support one another's learning. We argued that the variety and forms of support and challenge offered to and given by these learners worked to transform this group of adult workers into a *cohort of learners*. And we have shown that learners experienced their relationship to the cohort differently, depending on their way of knowing. Engaging in common learning experiences over an extended period in which learners worked *together* toward the same goal contributed importantly to the formation of a caring learning community in which adult learners supported one another as they participated in this program. For many learners, this cohort was "like a family."

This finding emphasizes the cohort as a holding environment for adult learning that both supports and challenges learners, leading to important implications for both adult learning program design and teacher practice. It suggests how ABE practitioners might structure classroom environments to better support learners who make sense of their experiences in qualitatively different ways. In the CEI program, learners did not have the open-entry/open-exit option available to them. In the late 1980s, Boston, Massachusetts-area ABE programs experienced increases in attendance and program completion after dropping this option (Garner, 2001, personal communication). While working and learning together in cohorts has great benefit for adult learners, it may not be feasible to build the same kind of consistent and enduring cohort structure into all programs, given the complexities of adult learners' lives, program restrictions, and funding requirements under which many ABE programs operate. Therefore, we suggest ABE programs incorporate as many cohort features as possible (i.e., variations on the cohort theme) into existing program designs to enhance learning, better support the development of classroom community, and increase learner retention rates.

Our finding about the power of adult learning in the cohort parallels findings reported by Hal Beder and Patsy Medina (2001). In their qualitative study of 20 ABE classrooms with highly diverse populations learning in a range of contexts, Beder and Medina comment on the disappointing effects that turbulence, "unstable classroom environments in which learners constantly come and go" has on adult learning, classroom culture, and the possibility of developing "shared meanings" (p. 96). In their study (2001) of basic literacy, family literacy, and workplace literacy programs in which classes were conducted in public schools, community colleges, libraries, community centers, churches, and workplaces in eight different states, they discovered that "mixed levels and continuous enrollment are very serious problems, over which teachers have very little control, problems with which most teachers simply cannot cope effectively" (Beder & Medina, 2001, p. 89). These serious problems, they argue, contribute importantly to teacher burnout and lack of learner success in ABE programs.

Much like us, Beder and Medina maintain that mixed levels in ABE classrooms and enrollment turbulence have important "implications for the open entry/open exit norms of adult literacy education as well as the time limits placed on student participation as a result of welfare reform and other adult literacy education policies" (2001, p. 15). Additionally, they suggest that the continuous enrollment policy, although often necessary to ensure funding, has important consequences. For example, they contend that continuous enrollment also influences learners with a propensity for "tuning out" in classrooms because presented material is too easy or too difficult. These learners become bored or cannot follow instructions (Beder & Medina, 2001). Furthermore, Beder and Medina (2001) suggest that "tuning out" may be characteristic of a learner who is near dropping out. They write:

> As continuous enrollment and, to some extent, mixed level classes are products of high dropout rates, and it is unreasonable to expect that the dropout problem will be solved either soon or easily, we will probably have continuous enrollment and mixed levels into the future. Better ways to manage continuous enrollment and mixed levels are possible, however. First, a systematic search should be made for the best practices in managing continuous enrollment and mixed skill levels. After these practices have been evaluated for efficacy and feasibility, they should be disseminated to teachers and program administrators through professional development and other means. Dealing more effectively with continuous enrollment and mixed levels is achievable, and doing so would have a very significant positive impact on adult learning experiences. (p. 105)

In this chapter, we also illustrated how cohort learners, with different learning needs and different ways of knowing, engaged with collaborative learning—which may be a classroom practice that would help address aspects of the "mixed level" problem Beder and Medina point to above. We have shown how learners across ways of knowing differentially experienced *academic*, *emotional*, and *cognitive* benefits from working in collaborative learning groups with fellow cohort members. Because ABE classes will be composed of adults who make meaning at different developmental positions, and who have different learning needs (mixed levels within any one classroom), ABE programs that support these different students as they grow will be especially effective.

We illustrated the ways learners experienced collaborative group learning and suggested that these seem to mirror the goals Hamilton (1994) articulates for Trimbur's (1993) three models of collaborative learning. At the start of this chapter, we invited consideration of several questions. How might learners who make sense of their experience with different underlying meaning systems experience each of these models? What types of developmental supports and challenges might be necessary for learners to engage in any one of these models? How might learners benefit if teachers were to incorporate aspects of all three of these different models into their classrooms? How might ABE teachers who include collaborative learning in their classroom practices benefit from understanding the different developmental origins of adults in these groups?

As mentioned, the first model, the "postindustrialist model" of collaborative learning, in Hamilton's (1994) view, "appears in classrooms in the form of group efforts to solve common problems formulated by an instructor whose curricular agenda determines group structure, time on task, goals, and anticipated answers"
(p. 94). The goals of the "social constructionist model" include "engaging students more actively in their learning while concurrently developing social skills of negotiation and consensus building" (Hamilton, 1994, p. 95). The challenge of the "popular democratic model" of collaborative

development is "not to obliterate essential differences in the search for commonalties but rather to envision these essential differences . . . as catalysts for the making of meaning within specific concepts of the particular course" (Hamilton, 1994, pp. 95–96).

As we have illustrated, learners in the Polaroid cohort who were Instrumental knowers primarily valued opportunities to work collaboratively for *instrumental* reasons. These learners appreciated working with cohort members because it helped them achieve specific concrete, behavioral goals. Their reasoning aligns with the goals Hamilton (1994) articulates for Trimbur's (1993) "postindustrial model." They reported that cohort collaboration helped them:

- "find the right answers" in math, or the correct sentence structure when writing
- learn how to use the right words to better express themselves in English, and improve their vocabulary
- learn how to communicate better with other people at work, at home, and in their daily interactions with people in the world (e.g., co-workers, supervisors, school officials, and/or their children's teachers)
- see classmates and even themselves as holders of knowledge (constructed as an accumulation of facts)
- understand the meaning of words and concepts
- learn how to learn on their own (as evidenced by demonstrating a behavior)

We also showed that although learners who were Socializing knowers valued the instrumental supports named by Instrumental knowers, they also spoke about appreciating encouragement from fellow cohort members. Socializing knowers especially valued the cohort and collaborative work for the important emotional and psychological support it offered as they balanced the multiple demands of work, family, and school. Their experience mirrors the goals Hamilton (1994) names for Trimbur's (1993) "social constructionist model" of collaborative learning. It helped them:

- feel "comfortable" asking questions when they did not know the answer or did not know what do to in particular situations
- learn to "socialize with other people"
- feel less "afraid when speaking English" in front of others (both within and outside of the classroom)

Although Self-Authoring knowers mentioned instrumental, psychological, and emotional reasons why working with cohort members was helpful, they focused particularly on their appreciation of the different perspectives cohort members brought to a particular learning activity and how this helped broaden their perspectives. Their experience aligns closely with the "popular democratic model" (Trimbur, 1993, as cited in Hamilton, 1994) of collaborative learning. Self-Authoring knowers reported that working with other cohort members helped them:

- enhance their learning and teaching *processes* because they were exposed to varying perspectives (points of view) on particular issues

- better understand and appreciate themselves and other learners' academic and life experiences

- recognize and, at times, appreciate forms of difference and commonality across and beyond the cohort

The cohort and the collaborative learning groups in the CEI Adult Diploma Program classes served as contexts in which adults were often encouraged by each other, and by teachers, to challenge their own assumptions. A person's assumptions, we believe, deeply influence the ways in which a person thinks and acts (Kegan & Lahey, 2001). We have examined some of the ways the cohort and collaborative learning groups served as transitional spaces and holding environments for growth. Notably, two learners did not speak initially about group learning experiences. Specifically, during the first and second rounds of interviews, Renada and Teresina did not say much about working with other cohort members in small and large groups. However, as their expressive language skills seemed to improve (based on what we learned from them in interviews and classroom observations), they talked about participating more fully in small cohort groups and more often valuing group work with cohort members. Thus, even for members who did not seem initially as connected to the cohort as others, the learning community still seemed to have a powerful presence.

Significantly, the above three classifications of learners' experience closely match those described in the literature. Although Hamilton (1994) presents these models as a kind of a hierarchy of use, it is important for teachers to consider 1) not all learners can take advantage of the entire hierarchy, 2) some learners will find their highest level of use in one of the models, and 3) there is a need to create classroom environments in which all models are working synergistically. As we have said, Hamilton (1994) suggests a teacher would benefit from selecting and implementing one particular model *for any one class* that suits his or her teaching philosophy or personal style. However, since learners make sense of the *same process*—collaborative learning—in qualitatively different ways, selecting and implementing only one model would support learners with one way of knowing better than it would others. Learners with different ways of knowing used several model types—to varying degrees and depending on their way of knowing—and needed different forms of support and challenge to benefit from these experiences. Therefore, we suggest that teachers adopt a *plurality* of approaches, flexibly incorporating components of all three models in any *one classroom* to meet and attend to a wide range of learners' ways of knowing and diverse learning needs.

We believe that ABE teachers will benefit from recognizing the multiple ways learners make sense of the cohort and collaborative learning groups. We hope this work offers insights to educators and program designers and sheds light on the importance of understanding how adult learners *differently* experience and benefit from cohorts and collaborative groups. This kind of developmental attentiveness may allow us to meet adult learners where they are and better scaffold learners with a diversity of learning needs, ways of knowing, and hopes for the future.

In the next chapter, we turn to how the cohort and other features of this CEI program (e.g., teachers, structure, and curriculum) helped adult learners transfer classroom learning to their lives. We focus on the changes learners reported in themselves and attributed to their program experience.

In so doing, we also highlight observed developmental changes in their meaning making and how these developmental changes reshaped their relationship to work and their world.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

"We're Trying to Get Ahead": A Developmental View of Changes in Polaroid Learners' Conceptions of Their Motivations for Learning, Expectations of Teachers, and Relationship to Work

BY:
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PROLOGUE

"Life is full of opportunities; you just have to reach out and grab one.
Never give up your dreams." (Hope, June 1999)

June 27, 1999, was a sunny, warm, and clear Sunday afternoon in Boston, Massachusetts. Shortly after noon, our research team left nearby Cambridge, traveling to the University of Massachusetts' campus, located just steps away from the John F. Kennedy Library on a piece of land offering an inspiring view of Boston's waterfront and harbor islands. We were on our way to join Polaroid Corporation's adult learners for their graduation from high school. The Continuing Education Institute (CEI) holds graduation ceremonies each year at this campus. The adult learners who participated in CEI's diploma program classes would receive their high school diplomas that day. This was a day to celebrate and a time to remember.

Adult learners from five CEI-sponsored adult diploma programs in the greater Boston area gathered together on this special day with their families, friends, coworkers, CEI teachers, and program administrators, as well as CEI president Dr. Lloyd David. Distinguished guest speakers came to celebrate and recognize the graduates' most impressive achievement: completing the CEI Adult Diploma Program and earning a high school diploma. On that sparkling Sunday afternoon, each adult learner who had successfully completed all graduation requirements during the 14-month program at Polaroid or other CEI sites, would be awarded a high school diploma from Boston's Cathedral High School.

While traveling from Harvard's Graduate School of Education to the University of Massachusetts, Boston campus, we talked about our deep admiration for all that the learners in the Polaroid cohort had accomplished over the course of their program. We reminisced about our first meeting with these special people—just 15 months earlier—when we introduced ourselves as researchers while inviting their participation in our research study. On that opening day, the adult learners in the Polaroid program attended an orientation and welcoming event, "The Kick-Off," at Polaroid's Norwood facility in the meeting room where their program classes would take place.

As we traveled to the graduation ceremonies, we remembered these learners telling us about their initial feelings of trepidation about enrolling in the program. During that trip, we also talked about how rewarding it was to have witnessed *changes* in the ways in which the Polaroid participants thought about their learning and themselves. In the months between kick-off and graduation, learners had discussed with us certain changes in their sense of confidence. They had shared with us the important difference that learning in this program had made for them—both at work and at home. We were moved by how much these learners had talked about themselves, both individually and as a group, as "changed" by their participation in the program. We were inspired by the relationships they developed with each other and with their teachers—and by the way in which these relationships supported their learning. Learning and earning the diploma meant so very much to them.

Conducting research with these adult learners opened our minds and our hearts to their sense-making. While we conducted research, and especially on that Sunday, we celebrated the privilege of accompanying these exceptional people along their important learning journey. We were and remain grateful for all they have taught us about their worlds.

Entering the auditorium a few minutes before ceremonies were to begin, we searched the several hundred faces and scores of seating sections to find "our" group of learners. Our eyes darted about the large, tiered assembly room, making contact with the Polaroid cohort graduates one by one. Seventy-four adults would receive their diplomas that day, and 16 of these were the Polaroid cohort we had come to know so well. Graduating men were dressed in robes of green for this special occasion, and women wore gold gowns. The different cohorts gathered together in designated seating sections. The room brightened with faces beaming with the kind of joy wished for us all at times of commencement. We located our seats in a center-section row toward the rear of the now-buzzing auditorium. Throughout the room, small children gripped helium-filled balloons with emblazoned congratulations. Adults moved quickly here and there, offering congratulatory handshakes and hugs to each other, mixing green with gold and gold with green as they reached out with extended hands.

"Pomp and Circumstance" played as the graduates marched down the auditorium aisles, followed by CEI teachers and CEI's program president and program director. The commencement speaker, Dr. Ismael Ramirez-Soto, dean of UMass, Boston's College of Public and Community Service, followed the CEI group to the front of the auditorium. Graduates seated themselves in the first dozen or so rows while CEI people and certain guest speakers took their places on the elevated stage. Speakers representing students at each of CEI's five program sites sat with their cohort groups, as each site group had elected its own class speaker to express a few thoughts about their learning journeys on this important day.

Kathy Hassey, CEI's program director and a dedicated educator who once taught high school math and science, opened the ceremony. She talked about this graduating Class of 1999 as a "diverse, kind, and spirited" group of learners who spoke 14 different native languages in addition to English. After these opening remarks, Dr. Lloyd David presented the Class of 1999. Dr. David shared his initial vision for CEI, which was founded in 1977 as an organization to help adults in the workforce earn high school diplomas. He spoke of his hope to help "every adult to become more literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in an international economy." CEI was founded to create innovative educational and training programs for adults in the workplace who needed English and academic skills, and more than 7,000 adults have participated in these programs. Proudly, Dr. David reported that this was CEI's 18th graduation. He said earning a high school education is important for many reasons—among the more practical, access to job opportunities with "better salaries."

Dr. David congratulated graduates before passing the baton back to Kathy Hassey, who introduced graduation speakers. Hope, the class-elected speaker from the Polaroid Corporation cohort, spoke fourth. Dressed in her flowing gold robe, Hope approached the podium with grace and self-assurance. During a focus group meeting we held just one week earlier, Hope excitedly told us how happy she was to have been elected speaker for her cohort class. She said she had worked very closely with her classmates to be sure the ideas she presented at graduation represented the cohort's thoughts. During that focus group session, Hope also told us and her cohort colleagues that she had created a second speech on her own and she hoped the group would help her decide which of the two speeches to deliver on graduation day. After much discussion, Hope was convinced it would be better to deliver the collaborative speech rather than her own.

Many of the Polaroid learners told us they had "dreamed" of graduation day before and during the program. During our research, we often heard learners say that it was "harder" for them to learn, because they were "adults" or "grown-ups" with multiple responsibilities. Often we heard learners say how "proud" they were of themselves for being able to "stick with it" even when they doubted their abilities. Support from family, classmates, teachers, coworkers, and supervisors gave them the encouragement they needed to continue. Hope spoke:

> We, the graduating class, would also like to thank our friends, family, classmates, and coworkers. It was hard work because we had families and other obligations, but

> we accomplished our goals. After all of this hard work, we are proud of ourselves and excited to be receiving our diplomas. We serve as an example to others to open doors of opportunity. You are never too old and it is never too late to get an education. Life is full of opportunities; you just have to reach out and grab one. Never give up your dreams.

After the final class speaker delivered his speech, Dean Ramirez-Soto delivered the commencement address. He told the graduates and all of us in the auditorium that the ceremony was a "celebration of your culture." He applauded graduates for their "hard work" and "energy." As an inspiring surprise, he also invited all of the graduates to continue their education by earning a bachelor's degree at UMass, Boston. "There is a place for every program graduate," he said. "This school was created for people like you." He reminded graduates that they had earned an important degree and encouraged them to use it as a "steppingstone."

Sister Patrice, the assistant principal of Cathedral High School—the diploma-granting Boston school—then offered congratulatory remarks to the graduates. After her greeting, she and Dr. David awarded the diplomas. We watched as each graduate proudly walked to center stage to receive the "piece of paper" encased in a hunter green folder. Applause and cheers filled the air as each graduate was announced. Ceremonies concluded with Kathy dedicating a heartwarming poem to all CEI program teachers. We were all invited to attend a reception for graduates in the school cafeteria.

We walked the short distance to the cafeteria by way of an overpass that overlooked the John F. Kennedy Library and provided a stunning view of Boston Harbor. In the cafeteria, all waited to greet and again congratulate the graduates—in our case, especially the Polaroid Corporation graduates. One by one, they entered the room, faces beaming with joy. We congratulated. We took photographs. Diplomas were circulated and admired. We were honored to meet many families, children, and friends of graduates. Polaroid graduates talked with us about plans for future schooling. After celebrating with these wonderful learners, we wished them continued great success, and we bid them farewell.

Each and every adult who participated in our study, and all they had to say, became important to us as researchers and as learning colleagues. The CEI diploma program and its teachers shepherded participants through courses of study that helped them achieve dreams for personal development and enhanced opportunities. In many ways, it was also the path to Polaroid that made so much of this learning and opportunity possible for so many. Polaroid had hired many people without high school education over the years, and as economic and business forces began to change for the company, education seemed a better answer than layoffs or downsizing (although both would eventually occur at the Polaroid Corporation). No words could adequately acknowledge the generous contributions Polaroid and its many employees made in helping the adult workers learn, earn high school diplomas through the CEI program, and change their lives and themselves.

On the way home to Cambridge and Harvard, we shared our thoughts and impressions about the wonderful experience and the success of our learners and all program graduates. We wondered where they would be a year from now. We expressed our sense of awe at how much they had all accomplished and how meaningful the learning experiences had been for them as they worked through the program. We talked about the ways in which these special people had told us about learning that had made a genuine difference in their lives. We shall always remember these remarkable people, their proud graduation day, our relationships with them, and all that they have helped us learn.

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

> The literacy teaching-learning process is many things, but in the final analysis, it is an interpersonal relationship charged with emotion (Brookfield, 1990; Daloz, 1986; Wlodkowski, 1985). (Quigley, 1997, p.103)

In the prior chapter, we examined three main ways in which the cohort provided a consistent and enduring holding environment that supported the *academic learning, emotional well-being,* and *cognitive development* of the adult learners who participated in the CEI Adult Diploma Program. Our intention was to highlight how the interpersonal relationships formed among cohort members generally and in collaborative learning groups specifically served to enhance learning and, in many cases, facilitate development. By carefully exploring the cohort's rich elements we highlighted some of the reasons why it was a highly effective holding environment and how it supported and gently challenged adults as they engaged in the learning process.

In this chapter we will shift our focus toward illuminating the powerful ways in which learning in the program—with the support of fellow cohort members, teachers, and programmatic features—helped these adults re-create themselves and generate new goals, new skills, and new ways of knowing. Our findings teach us that the cohort and other features of this program supported and challenged these learners as they grew to *think* differently about themselves in their roles as learner, worker, and, in some cases, parent. While our primary purpose in Chapter Six was to illustrate how the interpersonal relationships formed among cohort members supported learners' development, in this chapter we aim to illuminate some of the ways that learning in the program changed these learners and their lives as workers—as they were "trying to get ahead."[1] We will discuss both the changes learners noticed in themselves and those documented in their ways of knowing—which shape how they understand their experiences and themselves.

While we are not suggesting that *all* of the changes to be discussed are attributable *only* to having a consistent and enduring cohort as a holding environment, we believe the cohort—as a program design feature—was one powerful contributor to remarkable changes in the learners. In this chapter we suggest that just as peer support was an important contributor to change, teacher–learner relationships stand out as an additional important support for these learners. Thus we will address how these relationships seemed to facilitate learning from the students' perspectives. Importantly, we will also show how learning in the program changed the ways in which learners were able to *enact* their roles as workers and parents. Our intention is to highlight specific types of changes in learners' conceptions of their motives and goals for learning, the teacher–learner relationship, and their role as workers, which they attributed to their experience in this diploma program.

There are two specific types of changes we will illuminate. First, the program supported *changes in the amount or type of skills or knowledge learners possessed*. Second, the program served as a dynamic transitional space that supported and challenged learners as they developed their *capacities of mind—these changes were transformational in nature*. Remarkably, *one half of the learners at this site demonstrated this type of developmental change*. This kind of change is not only about a change in the amount or type of skills or knowledge a person possesses, it is about a change in the very way a learner understands herself, her world, and the relationship between the two. Transformational changes are those that alter the *shape* of *how a person knows*—changes that enable a person to take a broader perspective on herself (seeing and understanding different aspects of the self) and others (Cranton, 1994; Kegan, 1982, 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Mezirow, 1991). In this chapter, we will explore both types of changes, highlighting the learners' perspectives on how they experienced these processes of change.

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[1] We acknowledge Jeff for this phrase which he used to describe how the program helped him at work and in life. We thank Jennifer Berger and Maricel Santos for their contributions to data analysis for this site.

First, we will show how learners who demonstrated different ways of knowing made sense of their goals and motivations for learning in the program and how, in many cases, these changed and expanded during the program. For example, many participants began the program with the single hope of earning a high school diploma (an external requirement) and, during their participation in the program, reported feeling greater self-efficacy as learners and workers and discovering new lifelong learning goals. Second, we will illustrate how learners with qualitatively different ways of knowing perceived teacher–learner relationships and how they made sense of what it means to be a good teacher. We will also show how, in some cases, learners' conceptions of the teacher–learner relationship changed during the program, as many of these adults increased their capacity to reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions. In this section, we will also highlight how learners with different meaning systems construct knowledge and the value of education—and how their conceptions changed during the program.

Third, we will present learners' initial constructions of their role as workers, their relationships with their supervisors (i.e., constructions of authority), and of the context of their workplace. We will also illuminate how, in some cases, their constructions changed as they engaged in the learning process. In this section, we will illustrate how learners made sense of the ways in which learning in the program transferred to their work and helped them develop greater capacities for managing the complexities of work and life (e.g., how learning in the program facilitated skill development, work-role enhancement, and other forms of personal empowerment). Since many learners told us their participation in the program not only influenced how they enacted their roles as learners, but also as workers and parents, we also will present participants' perspectives on the changes they noticed in themselves across roles.

While goals for adult basic education programs range from helping adults become better prepared to participate in the workforce, to developing skills, to engaging in social and political change (Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998), our study infuses these goals with a different kind of understanding. While each of these goals is valuable in its own right, we suggest that it is also important to consider how learners are making sense of the practices these programs provided to better support learners as they reach for their goals. Like our colleagues at the National Institute for Literacy, we believe this kind of understanding will promote more effective teaching and learning, allowing us to enhance our address to the diverse learning needs of adults in ABE programs (Stein, 2000). Moreover, we contend that the lens of developmental theory helps us better understand how learners make sense of their improved competencies and often demonstrate a new sense of personal empowerment. We, like other researchers who have examined ABE learning contexts (Quigley, 1989, 1992, 1993; Skilton-Sylvester & Carlo, 1998; Stein, 2000; Taylor, 1996), maintain that ABE classrooms are not just places where adult learners gain skills (e.g., to better express themselves in English or improve math competency), but that they are also dynamic holding environments where adult learners can grow to better manage the complexity of their lives and their work. Later in this chapter, we will discuss the urgent national call for more effectively supporting workers in developing new skills, competencies, and capacities in order to meet the demands of the 21st century workplace.

Throughout this program the participants told us about the ways in which they felt they had changed as learners, workers, and family members; most participants noted increased feelings of confidence, and some remarked that they were experiencing "lots of changes." Simply put, we will not only illuminate the changes learners noticed in themselves, but also show how the *shape* of their thinking changed with regard to their 1) motives, goals, and future aspirations for learning, 2) expectations of their teachers, and 3) relationship to their work. Before turning to this exploration, we provide a brief discussion of the context of Polaroid.

The Polaroid Corporation as a Workplace and the History of the CEI Adult Diploma Program at Polaroid

In November 1997, our research team met with the Polaroid Corporation's workplace education manager, Steve Williams, to set the final details of our research partnership. At that time, Mr. Williams explained he was part of the Individual and Organizational Effectiveness Training Group (a division of Human Resources). There were five teams in his division: 1) Leadership Development, 2) Product Development, 3) Technology Education, 4) Process Improvement Group, and 5) Workplace Education. Workplace Education, he said, was responsible for all programs offered to "nonexempt/hourly wage" employees; the learners participating in our study would come from this group. The Workplace Education group managed both corporate programs and outreach at Polaroid.

Mr. Williams' group developed a "Star Model" for skill competency development for Polaroid's nonexempt employees. The five components of this model are team participation, task management, functional, high performance workstyle, and information. Each component hinges upon a set of core skills. Table 1 describes the core skills, which are the skills associated with each component of Polaroid's "Star Model" for success.

Table 1: Polaroid's Competency Development "Star Model"

Component	Skills Set
Team Participation	☐ Works well with diverse team ☐ Active listening, feedback skills ☐ Negotiation ☐ Basic conflict management techniques ☐ Teaches others, gives presentations ☐ Problem-solving skills ☐ Responds to customer needs
Task Management	☐ Organizes work, ranks priorities ☐ Identifies and communicates resource needs ☐ Record keeping ☐ Acquires, stores, and allocates materials ☐ Meets deadlines
Functional	☐ Knowledge of basic work processes, procedures, customers, and products ☐ Chooses right tool, procedures for job ☐ Maintains, troubleshoots equipment & materials ☐ Basic quality tools (SPC, data collection, etc.) ☐ Basic financial understanding ☐ Technical proficiency ☐ Safety and environmentally aware
High Performance Workstyle	☐ Self-motivated ☐ Fast and willing to learn ☐ Efficient ☐ Resourceful ☐ Results oriented ☐ Collaborator ☐ Conscientious ☐ Flexible ☐ Ethical
Information	☐ Acquires and uses available information ☐ Collects, organizes, maintains, and reports data ☐ Uses computers to process/acquire/communicate information ☐ Obtains information via basic questioning ☐ Uses data to solve problems

Like many organizations across the nation, Polaroid hired many employees in the 1970s who did not have core skills. In 1997, when we met with Mr. Williams, approximately 5 to 10 percent of Polaroid's employees lacked these core skills. These employees and others hired more recently who also lacked these skills were invited to apply for the CEI Adult Diploma Program. We were told that many of these workers were from diverse backgrounds and without well-developed English skills (most were non-native English speakers). Mr. Williams also stated that occasionally workers from manufacturing teams who participate in the CEI program and complete it are promoted to "team leader" positions, or become "coaches" to other workers.

Polaroid had offered this program for two years prior to the start of our research study. During the first year of the program, most students were North American. In its second year, most students were ESOL learners—similar in racial and ethnic background to the learners in the 1998–1999 cohort. During the program's third year, Polaroid and CEI initially agreed to extend the program from a 9-month to an 18-month program because they discovered it was difficult for ESOL learners to "do it all" in nine months. However, in December 1997, the Polaroid Corporation decided to downsize its number of employees. Eight hundred local workers were laid off. This new development delayed the start date of the program, and the program duration shifted from a hoped-for 18 months to 14.

As mentioned in Chapter Six, Mr. Williams told us Polaroid's executives and managers were committed to supporting workers who wished to enroll in the program. In their view, the $5,000 investment required for each employee to participate demonstrates the corporation's commitment to education. Another form of support is that diploma program classes took place during the work day, and most learners were not required to "make up" the time they were away from their job sites (i.e., most learners had paid release time). Polaroid was also committed to supporting learners through completion of this program. Even though two employees, Veronica and Rita, were laid off from their positions at Polaroid during the second trimester of the program, Polaroid continued to financially support their participation in the diploma program.

Mr. Williams noted that he and others at Polaroid took pride in a "progressive" workplace. Historically, the program enjoyed a 99 percent retention rate. During the year of our study, 15 of the 16 Polaroid participants successfully completed it, as did one of the three workers from Polaroid's subcontractor (a nearby manufacturing company) (see Appendix A). In Chapter Six, we discussed issues relating to contracting with the Continuing Education Institute to provide adult diploma program classes, the CEI program design, and the CEI curriculum.

Table 2 presents an overview of the cohort learners who completed the CEI Adult Diploma Program and highlights sample characteristics as well as the changes we assessed in learners' underlying meaning structure from program start to completion. As mentioned in Chapter Six, "■" denotes a change in a participant's way of knowing; where no "■" symbol appears, our assessments did not indicate a change in a person's way of knowing. Throughout this chapter, we have grouped learners according to our initial assessments of their way of knowing to highlight patterns and to illuminate changes in their meaning systems.

Table 2: Polaroid Cohort Learners—Professional/ Personal Characteristics and Developmental Assessments[2]

Name	Gender/Age @ Start of Program	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learners & Their Work
Bill	Male Late 40s	United States	Instrumental 2 to 2(3) ■	Bill was a gregarious, American-born man who worked on the shop floor at Polaroid. His responsibilities included supervising others. Someday, he wanted to be

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[2] Throughout this chapter, we will discuss Rita's meaning making in sections where we examine learners who make sense of their experience in the Socializing way of knowing. Also in this chapter, we will discuss Jeff's meaning making in sections entitled "Socializing/Self-Authoring and Self-Authoring way of knowing."

				the "boss" at work. Bill dropped out of the eighth grade and was eager to earn his high school diploma. He thought that it would help him at work (in terms of eligibility for promotions), and also help him to be a good role model for his children. Bill was married, and he and his wife (who also worked) shared childcare responsibilities.
Renada	Female N/A	West Africa	Instrumental 2 to 2(3) ■	Renada, who had lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years, worked in a Polaroid lab administering tests and processing film. She needed to make up the time she missed from work while attending program classes. Renada thought that the program would help her to improve her English, which would help her at work, and in life. She was divorced and had two children in their mid-20s and one teenager.
Sal	Male Early 30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 to 3/2 ■	Sal, whose first language was Creole, worked on the shop floor at Polaroid. He was married and was the father of an elementary school age child. He wanted to earn his diploma because he thought learning was important and it would help him improve his English. Sal considered himself to be someone who was always learning on the job and in life.
Hope	Female Late 50s	Caribbean	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 to 3/2 ■	Hope, the oldest learner in the sample, lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years. She worked for Polaroid for more than 10 years and was very proud she was selected to go abroad to teach others how to work her machine. She held several different jobs at Polaroid. Hope valued education and thought a diploma would help her better express herself at work and in life, and improve the skills she needed for work. She was married and had two adult children.

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	Gender/Age @ Start of Program	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learners & Their Work
Teresina	Female Late 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 2/3 – 2/3	Teresina had lived in the U.S. for more than 10 years. She worked on a machine on the shop floor at Polaroid. She had a high school diploma from her home country, and her first language was Creole. In addition to wanting to earn the "piece of paper" (diploma), Teresina also wanted to improve her English skills, which would help her at work. She was married and had two toddlers.
Angelina	Female Mid-30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Angelina had lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years. She worked with a team on the shop floor. She was responsible for writing reports and communicating with others in her job. Angelina needed to make up the time she missed from work when she was attending diploma program classes. She felt that earning her diploma would help her to become a better team member and would help her improve her English. She was married and had two elementary school age children and one teenager.
Helena	Female Late 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Helena had lived in the U.S. for more than 30 years. She worked on computers doing film processing at Polaroid. Helena completed eighth grade in her home country. She was eager to earn her American high school diploma and thought the program would also help her to improve her English, which would help her at work and in life. She had two children in college and was divorced.
Veronica	Female Early 30s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition 3/2 – 3/2	Veronica, who lived in the U.S. for 15 years, worked for Polaroid on the shop floor and was laid off during the second trimester. She also worked as a salesperson at a company during the program. Veronica wanted to earn a diploma because it would help her to improve her skills, enable her to better support her children, and help her to improve her English. She was married and had a pre-teen and teenager.
Rita	Female Early 40s	West Africa	Instrumental/ Socializing Transition to Socializing 3/2 to 3	Rita immigrated to the U.S. when she was in her 20s. She worked in the camera division and then in the mailroom at Polaroid, until she was laid off during the second trimester. Earning an American high school diploma was Rita's "dream" for a long time. She felt it would help her to be a better-qualified, more skilled worker, a more effective parent, and a more effective communicator. Rita also wanted to improve her English. She was married and had two children (one preteen and one teenager).

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	Gender/Age @ Start of Program	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Descriptive Characteristics of Learners & Their Work
Pierre	Male Late 40s	Caribbean	Socializing 3 – 3	Pierre had lived in the U.S. for more than 15 years. He worked in quality control at Polaroid and was proud of the work he did. Pierre felt that earning his diploma would help him at work, and importantly, that it will help him to improve his English. He was divorced and had five children.
Toungh	Male Late 20s	Asia	Socializing 3 – 3	Toungh had lived in the U.S. for two years. He had a degree in architecture from his home country, but was not able to find work in that field when he arrived in the U.S. He worked at the same nearby manufacturing company ever since arriving in the U.S. At work, he was responsible for various administrative tasks. He was not married and did not have any children.
Christopher	Male Late 30s	Caribbean	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3/4 – 3/4	Christopher lived in the U.S. for ten years. He worked with a team and also independently on a machine, which made film at Polaroid. He wanted to become better educated and saw education as a key to "survival" and to moving ahead. Also, he very much wanted to improve his English. He had never been married and was the father of two children.
Paulo	Male Early 40s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3(4) to 3/4	Paulo had lived in the U.S. for more than ten years and he worked in several different positions, for all those years, at Polaroid. During our study, he worked in dome lamination. His work included report writing, giving oral presentations, and collaborating with supervisors and engineers. Paulo wanted to earn his American high school diploma because it would help him with his work and with accessing information so he could make more informed decisions. He also wanted to improve his English so he could communicate better with others at work and in life. He was married and the father of two college-age children.
Daniel	Male Early 50s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3/4 to 4/3	Daniel had lived in the U.S. for more than 20 years. He worked as a lead technician at Polaroid, working with blueprints. Daniel was responsible for teaching those who worked for him. He wanted to earn his American high school diploma and thought that it will help him at work and in life. Daniel also wanted to improve his English. He was married and the father of two adult children and two preschool children.

(Table 2 Continued)

Name	**Gender/Age @ Start of Program**	**Region of Origin**	**Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish**	**Descriptive Characteristics of Learners & Their Work**
Magda	Female Early 50s	West Africa	Socializing/ Self-Authoring Transition 3/4 to 4/3	Magda had lived in the U.S. for more than 25 years. At Polaroid, she worked on computers (taking measurements and analyzing data). Her work involved writing reports and using math. Magda felt the time was right to earn her diploma and it would help her improve her skills and English. She was married and had four children.
Jeff	Male Late 40s	United States	Self-Authoring 4 – 4	Jeff, originally from the South, moved north when he was a teenager. He made batteries at Polaroid and enjoyed his work because he liked to challenge himself. He worked with different machines and found that very interesting. Jeff wanted to earn his diploma and thought that it was "an important piece of paper" for job enhancement. He dropped out of high school in the eleventh grade. Jeff was divorced and had two adult children.

As a dynamic holding environment, this program supported and challenged learners as they gained skills and knowledge—"informational" learning—and also as they grew to experience understand the world in new ways—"transformational learning" (Kegan, 1994). This program served as a transitional space in which learners developed in important and life-changing ways.

Context: Research on Adults' Goals and Motivations—Learnings from the Field

> "A student's own motivation is truly the key to success." (Comings, Sum, & Uvin, 2000, p. 29)

It is widely known that one of the most prevalent problems facing the field of Adult Basic Education is learner retention (Beder, 1994; Quigley, 1997; Horsman, 1991). For example, Quigley cites a federal study (from 7/1/93 to 6/30/94) that showed the dropout or attrition rate in federally funded basic literacy and GED programs to be close to 74 percent. Recently, ABE program directors across the nation have been asked to improve their program retention rates; however, there is a lack of research investigating this problem (Quigley, 1997).

Researchers and practitioners alike acknowledge that adults learners who enroll in ABE and ESOL programs come from diverse cultures and countries, vary in their expressive English skills and educational backgrounds, and have diverse reasons for enrolling and multifaceted goals (Brod, 1995; Comings, Sum, & Uvin, 2000; Quigley, 1997; Valentine, 1990). Valentine (1990) examined ESOL learners' motives for enrolling in ESOL classes in Iowa and discovered seven themes that highlight why this group of learners decided to enroll. Their reasons for enrolling included:

- Self-improvement and improving personal effectiveness in society

- Being able to help their children with homework and able to communicate with their children's teachers
- Improving eligibility for a job or to participate in job training
- Being able to use English in daily interaction with others (e.g., going shopping and using the telephone)
- Experiencing satisfaction in knowing that they can learn a language
- Improving communication skills (e.g., reading and writing)
- Being better able to help others from their native country

While Valentine's work (1990) contributes to our understanding of ESOL learners' initial *motives* for enrolling in their ESOL classes, a recent study conducted by John Comings, Andrea Parrella, and Sondra Cuban (April 2001) adds to her work by investigating learner *persistence* in Pre-GED programs in the New England area. Their goal was to better understand how to help students persist in these programs. Through their qualitative investigation, they found students who were more likely to persist in these programs were

- over 30 years of age;
- immigrants;
- parents of teenage or grown children;
- had a history of prior self-study.

Importantly, these researchers discovered that previous negative school experience did not appear to affect persistence.

ABE scholars (Quigley, 1997, Brod, 1995) are currently appealing to researchers and practitioners, asking them to learn how to improve retention rates in ABE programs by focusing on what seems to work for learners who persist in these programs—referring to persisters who have completed programs as "successful learners" (Brod, 1995). They see these learners as an advertisement for a program and a rich source from which to learn about how to improve retention rates. Quigley (1997) makes a specific plea for researchers to focus on how learners make sense of their experiences in ABE programs to improve policy and practice. He maintains that the "voice consistently absent in many policy and practice decisions is the voice of the learner" (p.193). Gowen (1992) echoes Quigley's call and urges researchers to focus on "listening carefully" to the voices of learners; these voices, she contends, will help improve classroom practice and program design. More specifically, Quigley recommends using qualitative methods to better understand the complex life experiences of those who stay and resist dropping out in ABE settings (1997).

Our qualitative study responds to these calls by investigating how learners *make sense of* their motivations and goals for learning. In our study, many of the adult learners enrolled in this diploma program in a workplace context for reasons similar to those voiced by the ESOL participants in Valentine's (1990) study. Initially, a wish to be eligible for job promotions was the most common reason for enrollment. Given the longitudinal nature of our study, we were able to ask learners about their goals and motivations at four points during the 14-month program, which allowed us to track how their goals and motivations, and their thinking about them, changed over time. While many of these learners voiced similar goals, they made sense of these goals differently, depending on their way of knowing. We also learned that many of their goals changed over time. In the next section, we turn attention to illuminating *why* these successful learners who completed the program were motivated to enroll in the program, *how* they made sense of their goals and motivation—and how their thinking changed over time.

SECTION II: "I'LL HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES ON MY JOB": LEARNERS' MOTIVATIONS AND GOALS FOR LEARNING—STORIES OF CHANGE

> My education [shows my children] that I am older than them, but I still try to learn. That way they have encouragement from me that education is very important for them to continue their education, to never quit learning, to never give up their dreams, because life is full of opportunity. They will learn this message from me because I don't want them to think I didn't go to school because I didn't want to. **I wanted them to think, Mommy worked very hard, she went to school at age 41, and she graduate at age 43 from high school. That makes me feel very proud, and I think they will feel proud too**. Because any of these things, they are something, "Is your mother graduate?" And they say, "yes." Even if I don't know everything like them, at least **I am American graduate**. That makes me feel so good. (***Rita***, Socializing Knower, June 1999)

> **My reason to come to this class** most is writing. . . . I didn't have a problem with reading, much. Also the math, I learned a lot. Especially on the tests, like when they give the fractions, and decimals, something like that. It's fun, once you know what you're doing, and stuff. And also it's different, we have to change like we have to do [math] **the American way**, which is, it's not that difficult. . . . Most case he [John, the math teacher] . . . want[s] us to learn that way [the American way], because . . . this is a class so we can get used to the American way. . . . We explain to him, and he, [in] some class[es] . . . he wouldn't mind for us to do our own way. But he suggests, and I believe, getting to know the American way, you know, it's better. Which I think it's good to know. I want to live in this country, now I have to try to do everything. I think I'm proud to be in this class, and I look forward to doing more and more than what I have learned. **I know, if I have done this, years ago, probably today I was better person, because the more you learn, it will be better for you.** (***Daniel***, Socializing/Self-Authoring Knower, Focus Group, September 1998)

Why were these learners motivated to enroll in the CEI Adult Diploma Program? How did they understand the value of education? How did their thinking change over time?

During our first set of interviews (March 1998) with Polaroid cohort learners, we invited them to tell us about their reasons for enrolling in the program. At that time, we also asked about how they understood the value of education and, specifically, what earning a high school diploma meant to them (see Chapter Two for descriptions of interview protocols). We revisited these questions during our next three sets of interviews (September 1998, February 1999, and June 1999) and asked learners to respond to them. Our aim was to learn how and if their thinking about these issues had changed. In many cases, we discovered the meaning they ascribed to the value of education and specifically what a high school diploma meant to them had changed, as had their aspirations for future learning. Importantly, we heard learners express new confidence in their abilities in their roles as learners, workers, and parents. They attributed this increased confidence and self-efficacy to the ways their learning in the program influenced how they thought about themselves.

We will first present a brief overview of learners' motivations and goals for learning in the program. Then we will illuminate how learners across different ways of knowing made sense of their motivations for enrolling and goals for learning in the program, the value of an education, and the ways their thinking about these changed during the program. We will also examine how learners who made sense of their experience with a particular way of knowing understood these themes.

Initial Motivations for Learning: "Getting the Piece of Paper"

Initially, all learners told us they enrolled in the CEI program to achieve a common goal: earn a high school diploma. Unlike learners at the other two research sites discussed in Chapters Four and Five, where the explicit program goal was to prepare learners for enrollment in a GED program or help them learn English as a second language (i.e., the family literacy site), or to prepare learners for entry into college-level coursework (i.e., the community college site), learners in the Polaroid cohort were all working toward a single goal.

Some learners were also motivated to enroll in this program because they would receive "credit" from Polaroid—and their supervisor—in the form of points in Polaroid's "Applied Knowledge Program" (AKP). These learners were interested in developing better skills that would enable them to do their jobs more effectively. Most of the learners also felt the communication skills they would learn would help them achieve their goal of becoming "better team members" at work. For some, this meant becoming more skilled at pronouncing words; for others, it meant expanding their vocabulary. Several learners told us about their experiences of being "passed over" for promotions because they did not have "the piece of paper" and their hope that with a diploma they would be eligible for such promotions. We will later examine how learners across ways of knowing made sense of this experience differently.

Most learners expressed regret or shame about not having completed their high school education earlier in life—whether in the United States or their home countries. Regardless of their way of knowing, many looked forward to being able to "check the box" on applications and various forms indicating they had earned a high school diploma. Throughout the program, learners expressed hope about how a high school diploma would make a difference in their lives.

While learners' initial reasons for wanting to earn this credential or as many of them called it, the "piece of paper," varied, most seemed sure they wanted it and at the same time apprehensive about being in school again as an "adult." Just as Valentine (1990) discovered, we learned that many learners wanted to earn a high school diploma initially because they believed it would provide greater opportunities for promotions at work or greater chances of being considered for other kinds of employment outside Polaroid. Many had additional goals based on how they thought earning a diploma would help them in their lives. For example, in addition to wanting to earn an "American diploma," all of the non-native speakers of English also wanted to become more proficient speakers of English. Several learners discussed their wish to earn a diploma to be good "role models" for their children, and many, like Rita, thought earning a diploma held the potential both to inspire their children to continue with education and to model their own value of education. Several learners hoped to become better able to support their children's learning: They expressed a desire to help their children with homework and felt learning in this program would enable them to do this.

Many learners viewed the diploma as an "opportunity" and, as we will show, made sense of this differently. We will also examine how their thinking about the meaning of a diploma and the opportunities it provided changed during the program. Several non-native speakers of English shared their perspective that earning a high school diploma would help their efforts to adapt to the American culture. Speaking better English was a very important goal; several of these learners believed an American high school diploma would help them move forward as more capable people in America.

Though their reasons for wanting to earn a high school diploma varied, as did the sense they made of its value, this common goal brought them together.

Moment of Readiness: How Learners Understood Managing the Multiple Demands of Adult Life

> Essentially, an educator can do nothing to ensure transformative learning. Learners must decide to undergo the process; otherwise, educators indoctrinate and coerce rather than educate. (Cranton, 1994, p. 166)

Why, at this point in life, did these learners enroll in this program? Mary, CEI's program administrator, told us that after working with adults for more than ten years, she believed she understood what it takes for adults to successfully complete CEI's Adult Diploma Program: "Timing is everything." To Mary, this meant adults needed to be at a point in their lives at which they can invest the "time and energy" in academic work while balancing the multiple demands as parents and workers.

Many learners told us how the educational system in the United States differed dramatically from that of their home country. Some voiced regret about not having completed their education in their home country or upon their arrival to the United States. Some non-native learners told us that in their home country, a person needed to pay for his high school education and only the wealthy enjoyed such advantages. Several of the women in our sample told us that in their home country, they did not enjoy the same luxuries of education that men did. For these learners, there was a cultural expectation that they "stay at home" and help support their families by working either within or outside the home. Other learners made a decision not to pursue their education when they arrived in the United States because of their life circumstances. Both women and men in our sample talked about the need to work to support their families when they arrived in the United States. These learners said their first priority was to support their children and spouses, and their children's education, before thinking about themselves and their own education. A few learners did not voice regret about postponing their education. These learners told us they made a decision to wait until they would have the time and resources to continue with their own education.

Bill and Jeff, two learners born and raised in the United States, talked about how their prior educational experiences affected their decision to leave school and begin working at an early age. They shared stories of negative learning experiences in school; it was hard for them to remember *any* positive formal schooling experience. Each talked about feelings of shame about having not yet completed a high school education and, at the same time, voiced their determination to do so *now*. At the start of the program, Jeff told us that a high school diploma "is something I've been wanting for 20 years."

Many learners, both native and non-native speakers of English, talked about prior unsuccessful attempts to earn their high school diplomas. Upon entering the program, learners repeatedly stated, "It's my time," meaning that after having worked long and hard at supporting others (both emotionally and financially), it was time to focus on their own learning. For most learners, this meant managing multiple responsibilities as workers, parents of school-aged children, and caretakers of family members while also fulfilling their obligations as learners. Several learners with grown children felt better able to meet their multiple demands because they no longer had young children at home.

For example, Magda described her decision to enroll in the program and reflected on how the timing was right for her now that her children were grown. At this point in her life, she felt she had more "freedom" because she no longer had smaller children in her care: "That's why I took this course at this time. I didn't do it the last time because right now I have a lot of freedom." Magda compared her situation to that of other people who have little children: "I see from other people, they have little children . . . they cannot even do their work." In the third interview, Magda again emphasized the "good timing" of waiting to earn a high school diploma until her children were grown. In response to the interviewer's questions about the most meaningful experience of the program, Magda focused on her sense of accomplishment at having been able to make time to study.

> So, I wanted to [earn my high school diploma] for a long time, but I couldn't because I had younger children, it was difficult [for me to do it] . . . I knew I would really give up. I wouldn't finish it. That's why I didn't do it. But now, I think was the time. And if I finish it, and hopefully I will, I think it's a great accomplishment. (PI #3, p. 4)

Magda understood her participation in the program as a choice she made for herself. Magda was aware of the challenges associated with raising young children and going to school at the same time. Had she enrolled when the children were young, she felt that she would have "[given] up," that she "wouldn't have finished [the program]."

Daniel, like Magda, recognized how difficult it would have been for him to balance school with his other responsibilities. In a focus group we held after the learners completed their first trimester in the program, Daniel echoed Magda's feelings about the importance of timing in making his decision to enroll in the program.

> The reason I didn't take it before, I was too busy, also my job, also my house, and everything. Raise the family, it's tough to force to take a course like this. But it was something I should have done. I regret that I didn't do it before. But I'm glad it's not too late. (Daniel, Focus Group, 9/1/98, p. 6)

In contrast, other learners still raising younger children spoke about the challenges of balancing their responsibilities as parents, workers, and learners. For example, Bill, Rita, and Veronica had school-aged children at home. For Bill, finding the "time" to do all that he needed to do was a challenge. In September 1998, during one of our focus group discussions, Bill shared his experience of balancing the multiple demands.

> I hate doing any homework. I have no **time** for it, sometimes. Some weeks they give you a little more than extra, but it's [hard]. I have five kids at home. And I have five kids going to four different schools and five different directions all week long. My wife works a different shift than me, and I just have no time to do it. I got a big incomplete on the reading [assignment]. I got to make up a bunch of stuff, too, on the Writing class. [Writing classes took place on some] days I just didn't get here. I made all my math [classes], though. I'm missing one, I think. But I'm missing about six or seven or whatever of the other ones. And now I'm making up time, and I just ain't got time.
>
> I'm trying to [make up my assignments], but I'm having a difficult time, you know? I was almost at the point of saying, "See ya." Well, you know, they want me to do all this stuff, make up this stuff I made, you know, and I'm passing all [the subjects]. My journal was complete. I'm talking about the writing class. And now

> she [the English/Writing teacher] wants me to do a bunch of makeup stuff. I had trouble doing homework, you know, so doing makeup stuff is just very difficult for me. I mean, there should be a little less. I mean, I know we only get two days a week [in program classes], and only 14 months to [complete the program and] do what other people [do in] four years.

For Bill, as was true for several learners, finding "time" to fulfill and balance multiple responsibilities was a struggle. Although Bill, like many other learners, considered leaving the program, he did not. He cites the support of his program teacher, John (the math and science teacher), as a critical source of support. Bill thought John really cared about him and encouraged him (i.e., gave him the courage) to persevere.

Although learners expressed initial trepidation about being able to do all that would be required of them in their various roles as learners, parents, and workers, most told us that they believed that "working hard" and "focusing" on their learning would help them accomplish their goal. As Pierre said before the program began, "I don't know if I can make it, but I'm going to work hard to make it." In the following sections, we will examine how learners conceived their motivations for learning and the value of education and how, in many cases, their conceptions of these goals, and sometimes the goals themselves, changed during the program.

Learners' Conceptions of their Motives and Goals for Learning and the Value of Education—Changes Over Time

The Instrumental Way of Knowing

> A GED is if you just can read a book, study one subject for an hour to take a test, and write it out. But to get a diploma, you've got to go and experience all the aspects of what the subject is, **you've got to learn a lot more, you've got to just know more.** You've gotta go for a long time. I can take a GED test in one afternoon. But to get a diploma, I've got to go for a whole year and a half. (***Bill***, PI #1, p. 25)

Two learners, Bill and Renada, were motivated to earn a diploma because with that "piece of paper" in hand, they thought that they would have better chances for job promotions and also be better models for their children. At the start of the program, they did not yet reflect on the larger more abstract (general) meaning of education; instead, they had a concrete understanding of what a diploma and education meant. These learners experienced their behaviors (e.g., earning a diploma) as linked to direct consequences (e.g., getting a better job or a bigger salary). In other words, they see a cause and effect relationship between "getting a diploma" and its "opening a door" to a better job or to college. At program entry, they made sense of their experience at the Instrumental way of knowing. Toward the end of the program, although they still had concrete reasoning about what an education meant to them, Bill and Renada began to reflect upon the more abstract meaning of issues in their lives. Both grew to demonstrate the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing.

For example, at the beginning of the program, Bill stated his view that becoming educated is about doing work. He compared "getting a diploma" to a GED and demonstrated concrete thinking capacities, as his words tell us. For Bill, a GED was not as valuable as a diploma—a diploma takes more work to get (a behavior) and therefore is worth more in terms of what it will do for him (a consequence). He knew that a diploma is better than a GED because "you've got to learn a lot more," "know more," and it takes more "time." Bill saw education as accumulating a set of facts or skills that will lead him to his goal, a high school diploma. He did not think about education in terms of a larger purpose or orient to an internal psychological experience of the meaning of becoming educated. Initially Bill discussed his motives for enrolling in the program as related to wanting to have opportunities for job promotions (and a higher salary). Like many other learners, he also wanted to be a good model for his children. He told us he believed earning a diploma would motivate his children to continue their education.

In the last interview (June 1999), Bill recalled that when he started the program, he just wanted to complete the program, as if doing so would lead to little more than receiving a diploma, which in turn would lead to more and/or better job opportunities. He remembered, "At the beginning . . . I just wanted to get it and get out." But in the final interview, Bill shared his newer thinking, which marked a change in his understanding of how education and his participation in the program helped him to have a better appreciation for others.

> I have a better appreciation for people who come from poor countries and third world countries or whatever, but as I said, I've seen a 100 percent improvement in their reading and just the way they talk to other people. A little more confident. (PI #4, p. 3)

During the first three interviews, Bill told us he thought his children would want to graduate from high school because upon seeing the party he would throw for himself, they would wish to have the same kind of celebration in their honor when they graduate from high school. However, we noticed a change in the way Bill conceptualized the *reward* of finishing the program in our last interview with him. Graduating was no longer about having "a big party." In fact, Bill, his wife, and his children would attend an extended family reunion dinner in lieu of a graduation party for Bill. At that time, Bill's achievement was completing the program (an internal rather than an external reward). When asked during the final interview if he would be inviting his extended family to the graduation ceremony, Bill explained,

> No, no. I didn't invite nobody [to the graduation]. I'm taking my immediate family because afterwards we're going to, my nephew put together a family thing, not knowing I was graduating, just to get the family together because they haven't seen each other in years, we haven't seen each other in years, so we're all getting together. So I told him I was graduating the 26th, so he put the party together for the 27th, from 2:00–4:00. And that's when I graduate. . . . I said, so, tell them we'll meet at 5:00 . . . they're all old, they have no babies, I'm the only one with young kids. So I'm the only one that's being put out. They wanted meet at 2:00. I said that's crazy, meet at 5:00, so I'm hoping they all meet at 5:00. Even if they meet at 2:00, there's be an hour before they sit down, there's like 25 of them, then there'll be another two hours, they'll sit talking and eating. So I'll be there just before they finish. But I haven't seen a lot of them in a long time, so. [*That'll be fun.*] Ya, except it's gonna cost me a mint to take my seven out to dinner. (PI #4, p. 7)

Also at this time, Bill reflected on how he feels "stuck" in his position at Polaroid, voicing regrets about not having earned a high school diploma earlier because he feels he could have "done a lot better." This seems to reflect the cause and effect relationship Bill sees between earning a diploma (the cause) and job advancement (the effect). At the same time he shared an additional motive of wanting his children to "do better" than he had.

> I mean, I quit school. I hung around; I joined gangs. It's the pits, you know. I mean, at the time I thought it was the best thing in the world, to hang around the corner . . . and, you know, just party all the time, and stuff. But the party ended, you know. And all the sudden, I'm old and I'm older, and, you know, I'm still stuck in a job that—you know. I mean, I bought a house and everything, but I could have done a lot better . . . and I know they can. The values are, I want them [his children] **to do better**. . . . As I said, my mother and father got divorced, and I went through some bad times with them fighting, and stuff, but, if my wife ever leaves me, I'm gonna have to pay alimony for five kids, and I don't want to do that. [Laughs] So, it's important to keep everybody happy. [Laughs]. No. Yeah. **I don't know how I got the values. I just want 'em to do good**, and, you know, I don't want 'em to be a bunch of losers, you know.

Bill had a concrete understanding of the relationship between earning a diploma and having more job opportunities (e.g., getting unstuck in his job). This reasoning is also evident in the way he conceptualizes the relationship between "keeping everybody happy" and not having to pay alimony (both demonstrate an Instrumental construction). But, at the same time, we see a change in his thinking that shows his newly emerging Socializing way of knowing. While Bill does not yet talk more abstractly about what he would like his children to do or the source of his values, he demonstrates the emerging capacity to orient to others' feelings when he talks about "keep[ing] everybody happy"—although he mainly talks about this in concrete terms.

Like Bill, Renada changed her conceptualization of education's value during the program. She, too, saw the diploma as a "piece of paper" that would enable her to "get a better job." Although all learners in the sample spoke about the relationship between earning a diploma and having more opportunities at their workplace, they made sense of this relationship differently. In the initial interview, Renada, a non-native speaker of English originally from West Africa, shared her motive for wanting a diploma: so that she can go somewhere:

> Well, I always want to learn more and to have my diploma because, right now, I know if you don't have enough class to have a diploma, you can go nowhere. If like I want to bid on a job, or something like that, they ask for a diploma. High school or college. That's why I want to learn. (PI #1, p. 6)

Similarly, in this first interview Renada discussed another motive for earning her diploma: learning in the program will "make my job easy" and it will help her "to communicate." Like many Polaroid learners regardless of their way of knowing, Renada wanted to be in the program "to get more skills." Renada talked about gaining more "skills" that are concrete in nature.

But at the end of our study, Renada wanted to continue her education. When we asked her why this was important, she said she planned to take "some writing, reading" and perhaps computer courses to help her at work and in life. This mattered to her because

> It helps you a lot of things. At work, you can communicate, you can write and read, computers. Now you need to know. They say, yeah, I can explain myself better. I'm glad, I'm happy. I almost give up because it was hard for me to write a lot [and because] my son sick, things, life [is] not easy. **Oh, I feel very proud of myself.**

> **Then I see now I'm willing to continue and to do some classes, and take course college**.

Renada wanted to continue pursuing an education by taking courses. This was a change from the way she initially conceived her goals for learning. Renada was beginning to orient to or talk about her internal, emotional experience of what it meant to have completed the program ("I feel very proud of myself"). While she continued to demonstrate an Instrumental way of knowing, she also demonstrated the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing.

The Instrumental/Socializing Transitional Way of Knowing

> So, and if you want something very badly, you'll make a way to get it, if you want it. (***Hope***)

Seven of the 17 cohort learners demonstrated both an Instrumental and Socializing way of knowing fully operating. At program completion our assessments indicated that Sal, Hope, and Rita demonstrated evolution in their underlying meaning systems (see Table 3).

Table 3: Learners with an Instrumental/Socializing Transitional Way of Knowing

Learner	Region of Origin	Way of Knowing at Program Start & Finish	Initial Motive For Enrolling in the Program
Sal	West Africa	2/3 to 3/2 ■	To enhance his skills and gain a high school degree.
Hope	Caribbean	2/3 to 3/2 ■	To learn to better express herself and earn a high school degree.
Teresina	West Africa	2/3 – 2/3	To become eligible for job promotions and earn a high school degree.
Angelina	West Africa	3/2 – 3/2	To "get AKP credit" from her supervisor, be able to move up in the company, and earn a high school degree.
Helena	West Africa	3/2 – 3/2	To increase her eligibility for job promotions, have access to other types of positions, and earn a high school degree, which she felt would change the way others viewed her.
Veronica	West Africa	3/2 – 3/2	To enhance her job security, be eligible for other kinds of jobs, and earn a high school degree.
Rita	West Africa	3/2 to 3 ■	To be able to go to college, become an "American graduate," be proud of herself, and have her children be proud of her.

While these learners share the same kind of concrete reasoning for valuing a diploma and education that Bill and Renada demonstrated, they are at the same time beginning to orient toward an increased awareness of and ability to report on their internal, psychological life. In other words, they orient more to their own and others' internal psychological experiences.

For example, these learners had a more abstract understanding of the value of education. Many talked often about how important it was for them that family members and supervisors were "proud" of them for participating in the program. Some of these learners voiced that they felt other people "respected" them more *because* they were working to earn their diploma, stating they felt that others *treated them* differently because they were earning a diploma. They also demonstrated the capacity to look ahead and see more opportunities that would be available to them with a high school diploma (although they often discussed these in a concrete context). In other words, learners with this way of knowing had an increasing capacity to think abstractly; a few talked about the other applications of their learning in the program to their life (however, this was mostly discussed in a concrete context).

Most of these learners, like Bill and Renada, talked about how an education was important to them because it enabled them to be better "role models" for their children. They wanted their children to be proud of them because they were earning a high school diploma. As the Socializing way of knowing emerged, however, education was no longer simply a means to an end, and as learners began to shift their construction of what an education meant, they often spoke about the value of learning for its own sake.

For example, Sal shared his initial motive for enrolling in the program, "I want to gain my degree, my high school diploma, and then I want gain more stuff to help me with the job at Polaroid, or someplace else, outside company." During this and the two interviews that followed, Sal demonstrated an Instrumental construction of knowledge. To him, ideas were things that you get and give. Increases in knowledge amounted to having more skills and facts; he could accumulate these. He also mentioned right and wrong answers repeatedly, illustrating a concrete conception of education and knowledge in which knowledge can be right or wrong.

But in our final interview, Sal seemed to understand bigger applications of his learning, which marked an important shift in his meaning system. At the end of the program, Sal shared his thinking about how increasing his skills helped him to know "which thing is right and what things [are] bad to do." In response to the interviewer's question about how having skills helps him know what the right and wrong thing to do are, Sal replied,

> Because you know things when you have a skills, so you're gonna know **which** thing is right to do and what things is bad to do. [*How?*] Well, it depends what, what thing you do, and then, what skills you have. Just for example, I have electrician skills. So, so that helps me to do or to direct what to do, how to work with electric, in electrician field, for example. How to tell people what to do.

Sal constructs knowledge as a kind of possession, an accumulation of skills. Knowledge is right or wrong, and it helps a person to meet concrete goals (telling "people what to do"). At the same time, Sal was now able to recognize bigger applications of his learning. When asked in the same interview if he learned anything other than skills in school, he said,

> Well, school is not just about skills or learning, this is all—all bunch of things—all . . . is not just that. 'Cause anything . . . we do, I think, is being learn in school. Everything we do . . . [in] everyday life, most, I would say, 98, 100 percent of them been learn in school . . . [*Is there anything else about it that makes you feel successful or proud?*] I learn a lot by doing this in this program. I learn . . . how to do the job interview, how should do the essay, how to do a thank you letters . . . that's many things about [finding a job]. On this last semester, we've been doing a lot about the job. How to answer question, you ask a question on the job interview, and things like that, how to dress up to go to interview. And then, where to find a job, where to look, which is the better way to find a job. . . . So, it's a lot of learning. [I've] learn[ed] how to reading better than before [and] writing.

At the end of the program, Sal also discussed how learning in the Life Employment Workshop class made a difference for him in terms of learning the skills he would need to apply for a different kind of job, inside or outside Polaroid. We see that at this time, Sal conceived learning as not just about skills but thought everything we do in everyday life is learned in school. Sal also had a sense of how combining different kinds of information he learns from authorities (such as Judith, the Life Employment Workshop teacher) helped his thinking, and he demonstrated the capacity to think abstractly (evidence of a Socializing way of knowing). At the same time, Sal still focused on how he was learning what the "right and wrong things" to do are—how to do a job interview the right way and how to follow the accepted rules for behavior (e.g., dressing for an interview, writing essays and thank you notes). This demonstrates an Instrumental way of knowing.

Sal articulated a commitment to education when he explained education in his home country. In his view, people in his country are too committed to education, so much so that it is like a "religion." He recognized that different people have different commitments and told us he knew his views about the value of education. When asked why he felt the way he does and why other people felt the way they do he could not elaborate. However, when asked just before graduation what he found most valuable about earning his diploma, Sal said,

> Well, what I like about it, because with this diploma, I can be prepared to enter the college. To . . . move on **onto another step with my job, to get a better job.** Because without the high school diploma, I don' think I'd be able to get into the college easy. I probably would, but it's probably hard. I would, you know, this my hope [to go to college]. I'm not sure when, but I would, I will go to college. [*Why would you like to go to college?*] Well, to improve my education, and to get something, less than three or four years. Like an assoc[iates degree]. Well, I'm not sure, I just . . . [it] is the sort of thing that I want to think about. [*What do you mean by that?*] Well, to get a better education than this, the one I have now. And then to up and get, or find a better job than what I'm doing now, **and to make a better life**.

At the end of the program, Sal understood his high school diploma as a steppingstone into college or a degree that will help him secure a better job. When asked if there was anything else important to him about getting a better education, he explained how an education will not just help him "get a better life," it will help him be "a better educated person."

> There is a lot. It's not just to get a better life, you get a better educated person. [To] knows things better—wrong and right—what to do, times when you do things, and when you need to do it. . . . Think better. Yeah. [It will help me know] the right direction and, you know, wrong direction. I think with the more, with more education, that's how it be better. . . . 'Cause while you've been at school, you've been learn all the things, what to do, how to do [things]. You're doing better in the class and the tests, on the tests you, so, I think that's the sort of thing, when you get them all together, . . . that's the thing that direct you, on what direction. That's what I think. . . . Yeah. All the skills you learn, you need it, . . . when you get all this, you combine all this information together . . . when you do things, all those gonna help you. They will help you thinking.

Sal now saw the diploma as being about more than helping him develop individual skills he needs for his work. He viewed it as something that will help him become a better person. We see he can put things together and see a whole larger than its discrete parts (i.e., all this learning helps him become an "educated" person). He could now elaborate on what a "better life" meant to him, and at the same time, he explained what it meant to be a better "educated person" in concrete terms. Sal's thinking evolved to demonstrate that the Socializing way of knowing was now predominantly organizing his meaning making.

In contrast to Sal, who spoke often about how earning a diploma would increase his chances for job promotions (especially initially, but also throughout the program), Hope rarely named the diploma as a key to promotions—in fact, she did not mention it until the last interview. In her first interview, Hope, who was born in the Caribbean, spoke powerfully about how earning a high school diploma—a "piece of paper"—would help her move forward in her life. She emphasized that that her husband told her that with a diploma, she would be "dangerous." For Hope, this meant that with all that she would learn in the program, her husband thought she would become more able to understand and explain herself and her thinking to other people both at work and in her private life. Like many of the non-native English speakers, Hope talked with us about how the educational system was different in her home country, where a person had to pay for an education after the fifth grade. For Hope, an education had real monetary value in her home country: "The diploma program, a lot of people say it's just a piece of paper. . . . But to me, where I'm from, you have to pay for high school. You don't get high school free." Like many learners in this program, Hope had had prior educational experiences that shaped her expectations for the CEI program.

Hope's high value of education helped her keep the "promise" she made to her mother about helping her brothers and sisters earn a high school education. Ever since she arrived in the United States, she has financed her younger siblings' high school education in the islands. Now, she observed, "I think it's, this time it's for me." Although Hope valued education and appreciated that it "costs money," there were other reasons she cared about it. There was some sense in her of wanting to be able to learn to "ask questions;" to question without fear was a key theme for Hope and other learners throughout their time in the program.

> To me, since we had to pay for high school, I recognize that it's more than a piece of paper because its something I earned, because I want it, I want it. Kids go to school up here because they have to. If they didn't have to, they wouldn't have to. And they only go because they, they are supposed to go. **But I'm going because I want more than the high school diploma. It's something that I learned to explain myself more freely, and don't be scared to say a question, or ask a question, and ask it the right way, or repeat anything the right way. 'Cause sometimes because you have an accent, things come out differently. And people look at you funny**. [*That's painful.*] Yes, it is. And sometimes you want to say something, and you don't say it, and then the person over there said the same thing, and you had it in your mind, but just because you're scared of, you say, you don't say it. I've had that happen to me. I would write it out, and just because I scared to talk, I wouldn't say it, and then the person over there came up with the same idea. (PI #1, p. 8)

In talking about how an education will help her, Hope said she thought it would help her express herself "more freely." However, she was not yet able to talk about what this would mean to her in a more abstract manner. Hope's concern with how other people will evaluate and treat her demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing. At the same time, Hope voiced concrete concerns about what it meant to her when she was "scared to talk" at work in a team meeting—that "the other person over there came up with the same idea."

Hope, unlike most learners, only named the diploma as a key to a new job in the final interview. At that time, she made an explicit connection between the value of an education and the opportunities it could provide both in terms of greater work opportunities and being a step toward "higher learning."

> I wanted the diploma. **Because I see it's an opportunity for me to get ahead in my job. And if I want to go higher, for higher learning, I could**. . . . It's up to you . . . what you want to do with it, when you get it. . . . [I] don't care what kind of encouragement teachers and professors give, it's what you want. Cause if you don't have certain **technology**, and . . . certain jobs are not opened to you. So, if you can get it [a diploma], I think you should make the best use of it, and get it. (PI #4, pp. 11 & 15)

Hope, in this last interview, not only sees her education as something that will provide her with greater opportunities at work and enable her to continue with her learning, she also talks about her *own* role and responsibilities in making these possible.

Helena, originally from West Africa, went to school up until the eighth grade in her home country. In the first interview, Helena shared that when she was growing up, "a lot of people don't care to put like women in school much, so they don't care about that." Helena's view of education was different from the one she held as a child—and she did all that she could, she told us, to encourage her children to attend a "good school." In her words, "I always want my kids to go to that school [a selective college]. All the time." At the time of the first interview, her daughter was close to graduating from [that selective college], and her son was about to begin an undergraduate program in another state. Helena thought that continuing her education was an opportunity to be a good role model for her children. In the first interview, when asked about how she was feeling about beginning the CEI Adult Diploma Program, she enthusiastically replied, "I look forward to everything." She then shared her view that education is important for work. Like many of the other learners, she thought having a high school diploma would give her access to jobs she would not otherwise be considered for:

> Because see, first now, see the job I have now, you see I don't have that before. I never had this job. Never, because [for] everything, you have to have a high school diploma. Everything. Everything. **If you don't have it you never gonna get any job better.**

In this first interview, Helena also spoke of "getting the piece of paper" as a source of motivation and of her awareness of the relationship between a diploma and eligibility for different kinds of jobs. The context in which she discussed her concerns was concrete and served as the underlying foundation on which her more general (abstract) concerns rested.

> You know the best part . . . I gonna learn more. I must understand better, so then when I go someplace, they say, "You have a high school diploma?" I say, "Yes." Every time I say that paper I have I just put in the paper. Because now everywhere you go, I don't care where you go, first thing they ask you. (PI #1, p. 14)

By the end of the program, Helena's motivation for earning a diploma had changed. Rather than seeing the diploma *only* as something that would help her increase her eligibility for promotions, Helena talked about how learning in the program *made her* want to learn more and want to "continue to go to school." Her cousin's encouragement helped her have the strength to apply to the program, she said, and her sister's support made a difference to her while participating in the program.

> So my cousin told me to go to, take this program. I told my cousin, "No, I don't want to because maybe they gonna be hard for me." She say, "Try, try, give it a

> chance, maybe you pass." I was in a school when I take tests, so when I pass, so I continue the class. I say, "I don't know if I gonna make it, I feel so scare[d]." . . . I never gonna give up, I say I gonna keep going. Then I try so hard do my homework, we work together school, so I go home, sometime I call my sister on the phone when I do some homework, when I'm reading to her, you know, I ask her if it make sense, she say "Ya it make sense." So now I'm done. I'm very excited. It makes me very happy, it make[s] me [want] go to school more and more, learn more things. . . . Never, never, never, thinking I gonna have high school diploma this country, I never think that. Never. So now I have it, make me very happy, then **I gonna continue go to school.**

During the program, Helena developed an appreciation for the process of going to school, and she was excited about getting her diploma. She was excited and very happy about completing the program—so pleased that she would like to continue school. Helena constructed the value of education as more than just getting a diploma and being able to get a job (although these concrete concerns were also important to her). In sharing more about why having earned a diploma made her happy, she revealed deeper reasons for wanting to continue with her education.

> Because now, first thing you look for job, anywhere, if you want high job, Polaroid, first thing they ask you for high school diploma, so if you don't have, don't even try for the job, they don't give to you. . . . One time I looked for part-time job, they say do you have your high school diploma, I say no, they say, no, you have to have your high school diploma. They [don't] even call me. So now I want reading more and writing and math. **I want to continue go to school**. . . . Reading and writing and having practice, more practice. . . . Because for practice. I learn more, more, more, more, more you learn, more better for you. Like this morning, my manager, he told me, when he retire[s], he [will] go to school. I ask him why you go to school when you retire, you don't need to go to school. He told me Helena, never late. I say, you should go to school now, I say, if I retire, I don't need to go to school. He say, yeah, you retire, you still go to school. He says a lot of people in this who retire in this country still go to school. Because they [inaudible] he's American. So I think you don't need this, but I think, he don't need it, so he say, he continue. . . . It's great if you want to go to it. But for me, I say he don't need it. Because he born here, he speak English. So he has education, everything, I think why he need to go to school. He say, Helena, the more you learn, the more better for you. I say, that's what he told me this morning. He want to learn more, more, they say more you learn, the more better for you.

Helena shared her thinking about what was important to her about continuing her education after the program: "having more practice." Practicing seems to denote an abstract way of thinking about learning as a process that is ongoing rather than just learning to "get a diploma" (demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing). At the same time, she does not understand why her supervisor, an American, should continue with his education after he retires, i.e., if he is going to retire, why would he want to continue with his education? (an Instrumental construction). What her supervisor told her seemed to make her think more about learning—and also was a source of inspiration for wanting more "practice."

Toward the end of this last interview, Helena spoke about the value of education, especially given the requirements for working in today's society. She emphasized the pleasure she would derive from being able to "check the box" on her job application to indicate she had a high school diploma. This was not only important to Helena but to many other cohort learners as well. Helena told us why education was important to her at this point in her life.

> Especially now, you don't have it, forget it. Because the first thing when you go anywhere, you filling out the paper, you have to put how much school do you have. First thing you have to do. You go to hospital, to take your kids, anywhere you go, you have to put how many education you have. . . . **Then when they see you have education, they respect you.** So if you don't have education, like if you look for jobs, when you just walk and go away, they pick it up the paper, throw it in the trash [if] you don't have no education. [*So, do you think, beside from jobs, that people respect you differently when you have an education?*] **Oh, ya. They do. Because sometime like if . . . like people, have that language, so maybe if you don't speak English, they think you stupid. That's the way they think, if you don't have the patience, you don't speak English, you have accent, they think you stupid.** You see it . . . they think you stupid, you don't know nothing. [You] have to really be careful. I see that even in store, like if you see something on sale, you have to watch them . . . maybe if you don't check, they put, they don't take money from the thing on sale. It happened to me. [*So you think they treat you badly, they try and cheat you because they think they can?*] Ya, maybe they think you can see nothing.

Helena voiced concrete concerns about having the diploma and what that will do for her; for example, she has to indicate *how much* education she has on different forms she needs to fill out in her daily life in her role as a worker, parent, and human being. Importantly, Helena, at this point, also talked about her concern for how other people *view her and treat her*. Feeling respected by others mattered to Helena in a personal way. She observed people treating her differently when they saw that she doesn't speak English (i.e., "they think you're stupid"). Helena can see that people think she's stupid, that they think she "don't know nothing." That Helena can and does observe this in her relationships with other people and that it clearly bothers her demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing.

The way Helena understands the importance of other people's evaluations of her and how they matter to her is emblematic of Socializing knowers who place ultimate importance on other people's opinions and evaluations of them. In fact, when a person has a fuller Socializing way of knowing, other people's opinions and evaluations of her *define* her. Simply put, a person who demonstrates a fuller Socializing way of knowing *derives her self-worth* from other people's evaluations and opinions of her. As Kegan (1982) eloquently puts it, individuals making meaning with a Socializing way of knowing experience other people's opinions of them in this way: "You [the other person] are the other by whom I complete myself, the other whom I need to create the context out of which I define and know myself and the world" (p. 100). While Helena was aware of how other people treated her and was bothered by their response to her, she described it and talked about it in concrete terms rather than reporting or expressing subjective states. This points to an Instrumental way of knowing alongside a more pronounced Socializing way of knowing.

The Socializing Way of Knowing

Two learners, Pierre and Toungh[4], made sense of their experience at both program start and completion solely with a Socializing way of knowing. Rita, who had both an Instrumental and Socializing way of knowing at the program's start, grew to demonstrate a fully and singly operating Socializing way of knowing.

These learners, all of whom were non-native speakers of English, talked often about how education and program learning would help them express their thoughts to other people. Being understood by others, they told us, was important to them; they defined themselves in terms of other people's perceptions of them. With this way of knowing, a person is "made up by" (Kegan, 1994) valued others' opinions and evaluations of them. It was important to them that their children were proud of them for earning a diploma, and many also spoke about *how* this process of becoming better educated would help them be a better "role model" for their children. They believed their enrollment in the program and pursuit of a high school diploma would model their value for education and encourage their children to want an education. Doing this would "pass on the value of getting a good education" to their children. When asked where their value for education came from, several learners told us that they got their values for education from their parents or home country. They looked to important others to define and hold their values (demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing). These learners identify with meeting cultural and social expectations, and, in a real way, they understand the opinions that important others hold of them *to be the opinions they hold of themselves*. They derived their *own* sense of worthiness from other people.

For example, Rita enrolled in the program because she wanted to improve her ability to communicate both in the Polaroid workplace and other areas of her life. As stated previously, Rita was laid off from Polaroid in the second trimester of the program, but continued to participate in the program. In Chapter Six, we illuminated how Rita's learning goals developed and evolved and how the program helped her envision future career and educational possibilities.

Rita, who was born in West Africa and lived there until she was in her early 20s, entered the program with the certain knowledge that she wanted to go to college, and she saw her participation in the program as a "first step." In the first interview, she explained,

> I understand better, you know. So, when I passed the test I said, "This is my first step." Is go to school and have my high school diploma. Then, second step I will see you in UMass.... If I graduate, believe it or not, if I'm still healthy, if everything is still okay, you know, there is no sickness around. You know I don't have many problems, like physical or no mentally, I will go to college. [*What would you like to study?*] I don't know yet. But I wait until I get my diploma. **That is the first step I want to move on**.... I will. Someday. My dream had to come true. . . . (PI #1, pp. 1–2)

However, during one of our focus groups in February 1999, Rita shared new and expanded thinking about the value of education. Here, she spoke about why an education was important to her—"for myself, number one, and, number two, for my kids."

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[4] Henry, who did not complete the program, demonstrated a Socializing way of knowing (i.e., 3) at program start and grew to demonstrate hints of a Self-Authoring way of knowing (in July 1999, after the program ended).

> I'm still learning every day because every time I think about this school and I pick up the book and I review what learned before, at least it will refresh my memory. **And what I have in my mind after I graduate, is that I'll go to college, at least for two years**. And I am mom of two and I got a husband and a house to take care of. . . . **And I want to get my high school diploma for myself number one and number two for my kids because they also ask** me why I didn't have high school diploma before, and why I dropped out. And it's hard for me to make them understand in old country you go up to 12th grade there, when you reach 12 years old you can't go to college, that's the end of it. They think I was dropped out, you know, and I say, "It's never too late. Mommy will have a high school diploma." It's very hard for any of us in here [the program] that has family and that have work. You have to do everything yourself and then to go to school is very hard, very hard. But never too late, we should focus on ourselves. I pray every day when I got up, I say, "Lord, please help me achieve my goals."

Rita, like learners across various ways of knowing, emphasized the challenges of balancing her multiple roles. She spoke about having young children she wants to care for and wants to be proud of her. Rita oriented to their perceptions of her, deriving her sense of worthiness and inspiration from them. We see that Rita looked to a source of authority outside of herself (demonstrating her Socializing way of knowing). Education was important to her because it was important to her and to her children.

In the last interview, Rita proudly referred to herself as an "American graduate" and emphasized once again how much it mattered to her that her children were "proud" of her. Rita seemed to be talking about how educating herself helped her better fulfill her role as a parent. When asked why education was important to her, she replied,

> My education [shows] to [my children] that I am older than them, but I still try to learn. That way, they have encouragement from me that education is very important for them to continue their education, to never quit learning, to never give up their dreams, because life is full of opportunity. They will learn this message from me **because I don't want them to think** I didn't go to school because I didn't want to. I wanted them to think, Mommy worked very hard, she went to school at age 41, and she graduate at age 43 from high school. That makes me feel very proud, and I think they will feel proud, too. Because any of these things, they are something, "Is your mother graduate?" And they say "Yes." Even if I don't know everything like them, at least **I am American graduate**. That makes me feel so good.

Rita also voiced her concern for what her children will think of her and stressed the importance of passing on the values she had acquired to her children—she wants them to keep learning, not give up their dreams, and to be proud of their mom. In so doing, Rita also demonstrated abstract thinking.

Having experienced what an "education is" in the CEI Adult Diploma Program, Rita felt better able and prepared to encourage her children to continue their own education. She, like other learners in the sample, spoke about the importance of being able "to check the box" on applications indicating that she has earned a high school diploma. Rita shared the ways that mattered to her. At the end of the program, she told us she now "knows" the "difference between go[ing] to school and go[ing] to work," and said,

> To check, if I looking for a job, I will check that box. And if I read something, at least I will understand what I'm reading. If anybody talk about school and math, science, American history, I know what they talking about. And I want to encourage my kids to go to school to study, to read a lot, to read a lot of books, that way they will learn because if I don't know what education is, I would not encourage them to go to school. I know the difference between go to school and go to work.... **When I started this program I was so low self-esteem that I, when I start, I didn't know which way I'm going. . . . I used to read something, and I don't understood, and I felt so bad. My children were smaller, and they didn't understand everything.** But now, thank God, I speak English with accent, but if I read any paper, I know what, and I think it because the root of the school, the education. [*What's the best part of being able pickup any paper and read it?*] **It make you feel so good**. Before I used to be shy, [not] open up my mouth, because I used to speak English with a terrible accent, very bad accent, but you know, **I go to school and learn how to do other things and I learn how to put the words together, spelling—that makes me feel good.**

Becoming an "educated person" was also very important to Pierre—this was one of his main motives for enrolling in the program. For Pierre, originally from the Caribbean, this meant being better able to express himself in English. Improving his expressive English skills was important to him because he wanted to "help" others learn (especially children in his home country) and also because learning English, in his view, would help others understand and respect him. Pierre, a Socializing knower, compared himself to "educated people" and longed to be someone he considers an educated person. "Educated people," in his view, "help" rather than "criticize" people who are less knowledgeable. Another goal that initially motivated Pierre to enroll in the program and continue his education was to learn to express himself better in English to more fully engage in communication with others. Pierre told us it was important to "be understood" by others. Although he did not expect to sound just "like American[s]," he wanted people to hear and understand him when he spoke. This was a pervasive theme in Pierre's interviews.

Pierre thought enrolling in the program and learning would allow him to "grow" in his job and "move forward" in his life: "In order to grow in my job, I must find myself more education, and I can move forward to help myself and my job also." In the final interview, Pierre spoke more about how his education in the program had enabled—and would continue to enable—him to be a more "helpful" person.

> [An education] give you sense to communicate, understand better, and solve problem quicker than possible. Have some problem, the idea come so quick, and that's all. **And people try to depend on you because you understand, you can bring an idea to make them easy for them.** Because with your education, [you have] a way you solve problem quickly, quicker, and anything happen and you, tell them, you think about it, and come in with an answer. [*What is important to you about other people being able to depend on you?*] **How helpful you are. . . . You cannot be a helpful person without an education.** [With education] **I will make things easy for everybody.**

In Pierre's view, an education was required to be a "helpful person." Both of these were important to him because he wanted to "make things easy" for other people in his life.

In this interview, Pierre explained why other people's opinions of him mattered. "People judge" who he is, he said, based on how he speaks and whether or not they can understand him. When asked what was most important about having other people understand him, Pierre softly replied,

> **The way you sound, the way you ask them, the words [you say]. . . . [It] is good [when people understand me].** If somebody talk to me I don't understand what he said, I don't have to pay no attention, and especially if you speak English to me, and **I don't hear what you said, it don't make no sense to me, you talking for the air, not talking to me.** . . . I think is better for me to speak little English, so when I communicate with you, you hear, you might hear the sound, this guy is not American, but I hear everything you said. And I, but you hear everything I said. . . . **As long as you communicate well, people don't care where you came from.** [*So it's what people are thinking about you is what matters.*] What's come to your [mouth] is how your mind sound. . . . **The way you sound, that's the way people judge.**

Pierre was concerned about how other people evaluate him and view him. As a non-native speaker of English and a Socializing knower, this was a clear and present issue for him—and he *felt* this issue deeply and personally. Pierre's feelings of self-esteem were directly tied to his English speaking skills and the way he thought other people perceived him. He wants the respect of other people and thinks his expressive English skills prevent this from happening. Pierre felt that other people evaluate him based on the way he spoke, which in his view reflected how his "mind sounds." How his "mind sounds" seemed to be equated with who Pierre felt he was as a person.

Pierre's case points to an important and difficult experience that learners who are both non-native speakers of English and Socializing knowers may have. Perhaps these learners cannot see themselves as competent if *others do not see them* as competent. At the same time, these learners know others cannot find them competent if they cannot express themselves and their knowledge well in English. Because these learners derive their sense of self from other people's evaluations of them, they may not recognize that other people's failure to understand them does not mean they do not have valuable things to say. This is especially painful and difficult for these Socializing knowers.

The Socializing/Self-Authoring & the Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

> What you do with knowledge after it's given to you is of your own choosing.
> (***Jeff***, March 1998)

At the start of the program four of the 17 participants demonstrated a Self-Authoring way of knowing in combination with a Socializing way of knowing. As shown in Table 2, by the end of the program, three learners (Paulo, Daniel, and Magda) had evolved in their way of knowing. As stated previously, Jeff, who demonstrated solely a Self-Authoring way of knowing at program beginning and end, will be discussed here and throughout this chapter.

Many of these learners, such as Rita and Pierre, were still concerned how other people evaluated them—they did not want other people to see them as "stupid." For some of these learners, external sources (i.e., people outside the self) were still the ultimate source of knowledge. In this section, we will first highlight some themes apparent in our data that illustrate how a fully operating

Self-Authoring way of knowing showed itself in these learners' constructions of their motivations for learning and the value of education.

These learners, unlike others discussed so far in this chapter, spoke about education as a *process* that would allow them to benefit from opportunities in life. All understood the educational process providing more access to different sources of information so they, in turn, could make *their own* decisions. Rather than looking to an external authority to decide what to do, these learners wanted to make their own decisions. They understood the teacher as one source of information and thought of themselves and each other as another. All of these learners voiced a learning goal of wanting to better understand concepts and processes so they could make their own decisions.

One of the key themes apparent in their initial motivation for enrolling in the program was the program as an "opportunity to grow." Over time, all of them talked about how learning in the program and how continuing their own educational processes helped them "feel strong." Each assumed some degree of responsibility for supporting their own learning and in most cases saw *themselves* as a critical source of support to their learning. This is not to say these learners did not experience the teacher's help as supportive—they did. However, all also voiced that education would allow them to do more things for themselves, and they were excited about being able to live their lives more independently. Additionally, these learners showed a capacity to take a larger perspective on the complexity of their own and other people's learning experiences in the program.

Like learners making sense of their experience with other ways of knowing, these learners talked about how their education would help them be eligible for greater opportunities at Polaroid. However, they understood salary increases as a means to help them help their families achieve their larger goals. For example, Jeff sought different sources of information to support his own learning and also saw himself as a source of information. However, Jeff made his decisions by considering (or taking a metaperspective on) all sources of information, taking a little bit from one place, a little bit from another place, and using his own knowledge as well as turning inward to make a decision. In other words, Jeff turns to himself for *his* sense of what and how to decide; in his words, "What you do with knowledge after it's given to you is of your own choosing." He had the capacity to develop theories about how things work (e.g., education and learning). Jeff has a strong sense of self-containment, a sense of really knowing what he thinks and how he thinks things work, as illustrated in Chapter Six.

Christopher, originally from the Caribbean, shared his strong feelings about the value of education in the first interview. He understood education to be a "key" to survival, to moving forward in his profession, and as a path to being someone in the world—or not being no one.

> I'm here because I didn't get a degree in [his home country]. It's different [there] . . . without education you cannot go anywhere. . . . So you need it to survive, to accomplish some things in life. **Without a good education people aren't going to be able to make any good decisions about making progress. You know, so I'm here, if I get a diploma, so I can learn. I can go someplace. I can move on. I can move forward.** . . . So I can put myself in a college where I can learn something for the rest of my life, you know what I mean, like to be a professional in something, whatever. . . . There's a lot, but, I can't sit there. I can't mention all of it, but there is a lot. It's not private thing, **but there's a lot in my mind**. That's the reason I want it. I want it so bad. I want it so bad. . . . The most important reason, I want it just because **without a diploma for me**, in [his home country] or here,

> **you're nothing**. . . . Holding a job, getting paid . . . still don't count for me because you need a degree, you know, that's the way I see it. . . . No matter if I'm making $100 an hour, $200, it doesn't count to me. So, all I need is something with a piece of paper, something valuable, you know, a good document, you know what I mean? . . . **It is more important than money. . . . It's like a key, I can open the door, with a diploma is how I see it.** I don't see the money for now, I see the diploma, you know. After I get it . . . I can decide what to do. [*You can use the key and open the door.*] That's right, open the door, you know. (PI #1, p. 2)

Here, Christopher talked about the value of education and connected it to the larger opportunities it provides. He pointed to the relationship between education and decision-making. With an education, he said, he will be better able to make good decisions. One of Christopher's motives for enrolling was that he wanted a diploma, but not just in and of itself. He saw it as a steppingstone and the *process* of education as one that it will help him *develop himself*.

Another important factor in Christopher's wanting to get an education was not wanting to ask for help anymore; he wanted to be better able to help himself. This theme of yearning to be more self-reliant was prominent in all Polaroid learners who made sense of their experience with this underlying meaning structure. In this first interview, he made the connection between becoming independent and being happy.

> **I feel so happy when, you know, I can help myself, when I can do things.** . . . You have to help yourself. **So, if I can do something without asking people, I'll be glad. But that doesn't mean I'm selfish; I don't like asking questions**. But I'm happy when I can, you know, do something for myself. **Show me what I can do. Demonstrate. Helping myself solving problems. I think it's a good thing for me, you know what I mean, so I don't have to worry. I feel happy. (PI #1, p. 8)**

In February 1999 (during the third trimester), in response to a question about how the learning in the program is helping him at work, Christopher reported a change in his ability to perform his work. He felt he had become better able to work more independently—without having to ask as many questions. He attributed this change to learning in the program. This was important to Christopher because, as he said, "I don't like asking for help all of the time. . . . I feel freer when I can help myself. I feel freer whenever I can help somebody."

Just before graduation, Christopher elaborated on how he understood the value of education; he explained.

> So, I believe, I strongly believe in having a diploma. **And having a profession**, things to do, so working someplace 40 hours, 40 years of my life. So by working 40 hours, you have a job, things good. I'm lucky. I get a job, but it is not that. **I need security things, like a passport, you need a passport to travel, you need a diploma to succeed, I think.** You [need] something you can count on, something you can demonstrate, something you don't have to worry about, so like going places filling out application, I will do that too, but [the diploma] will be more **for me**, than not have any. [*So having a diploma makes it easier for you to get a job?*] Not really to get a job, just to move on. . . . You need a diploma to get promoted, that

> you have good skill, things like that, to have that stuff. For now I don't see [getting] promoted with my high school diploma. I just see [it] as for me just to push me forward and to continue doing my future . . . what I want to do for my life, so with the diploma, I think I will be able to what I want to do if **I put my mind to it**.

Christopher now conceptualized the diploma as being like a "passport;" he viewed it as something that allows a person greater *access* to opportunities. He was able to see himself in relation to his context and not be completely defined by it. Christopher understood his diploma as something to "push me forward and to continue doing my future." This understanding suggests that, at this point, he saw the diploma as a tool—something he could use to help him with his larger learning and life goals—not something that defined him (a Self-Authoring construction).

Daniel, like Christopher and other learners making sense of their experience in this way, referred to an internal source of motivation that helped him to continue learning in the program even when he felt discouraged. In his words, "The important thing you have to have that feeling inside of you that you've got to keep going." In the third interview, Daniel, originally from West Africa, reflected on how he experienced himself as a source of encouragement. At this time, he also reflected on the internal changes he noticed in himself.

> Overall I feel better. I feel more encouraged. Like in the beginning I was thinking maybe I'll have my diploma and all of that and I'll be able to get another job . . . and things like that. But I even encourage myself to maybe study more, something else later.

Daniel sees himself, rather than an external authority, as a source of motivation. He had a new perspective on how he thought differently about his motivations at the beginning of the program. At the start of the program, he thought about immediate benefits, i.e. getting the diploma, getting another job, but at this time—toward the end of the program—he was considering continuing his studies (like Pierre who spoke of "doors" opening as a result of learning). In June 1999, Daniel talked more about what education meant to him. Before this program, he felt "ashamed" to tell others he did not have a diploma. At this time, he reported this had changed, and he was no longer "afraid to speak up to anybody." Daniel was proudest of "learning a lot" and being able "to speak up more clearly." This made him "feel more open."

Paulo, like Daniel, was also from West Africa. Also like Daniel and other learners making sense of their experience in this way, he recognized that having a high school diploma would make him more eligible for promotions. When asked in the first interview why he decided to enroll in the program, Paulo shared his motivations and goals for learning: to have a better future and make a better place for his children.

> To have a better future. Because now we are work, so I have to have a lot of knowledge about the teams, like reading, write. Because I have to write information. I have to talk to engineers all the time. I have to talk to all the peoples, so I have to be able to speak better and read information better, so this way I try. **Also because of to help my kids. To help my kids, and myself**, to pay my bills . . . or to go to the bank for some loans to buy a house or something like that. **If you can speak yourself, that's another reason too**. Because a lot of people I talk to don't believe I . . . haven't had a chance to go to school, I think I stopped in '87 or '86, because I started working over here in '86. (PI#1, p. 2)

Paulo also had a goal of wanting to "grow" himself and to ask others for support in helping him to grow. In this same interview, he shared, "I teach myself. This way, I think the school will be very good for me to have somebody to help me grow up, and I try to grow myself too." Paulo was able to take a perspective on himself; he knew that he wanted to grow himself, and he knew he needed some help doing it.

In the last interview, Paulo spoke more about the value of education, and we noted an important change in his way of knowing. In addition to sharing his understanding that education leads to "opportunities," Paulo talked about the acknowledgment he received from his supervisors, engineers, and plant managers who congratulated him the week before at a celebration party Polaroid held in honor of the workers' achievement and upcoming graduation. Paulo explained,

> Because when you don't have education, you do lot of things wrong. You lose opportunities. Not just you do something wrong, **you lose lots of opportunities.** Because since I started this program I start a little better, and start to read some information, I started to [learn] something on a computer, I have about four or five promotions at Polaroid. I have one last Friday. . . . **Because of my supervisor, my engineers and my plant managers** come over to the school last week [for the party in celebration of the learners' accomplishments]. When I will tell **them thank you for the opportunity they gave me to come to school and to show my perform[ance], with my results, so this feel very, very, very happy.** . . . The next day my supervisor called me into his office, and told me "Okay, I give you 4.6 percent [raise] because you do good, you have education and do the things better." So. **So this give me a lot of motivation to continue.**

While Paulo discussed getting a raise and a promotion at Polaroid, he talked about it in a way that framed within the larger context of what it means to him to have his good work (performance) recognized at work (demonstrating his Self-Authoring capacity). He also stated his understanding of the relationship between education and opportunity. Not having an education is about losing "opportunities," not just doing something "wrong." Paulo had a perspective on himself and his experience (what he has accomplished in the program) and talked about feeling very proud and happy of *his* accomplishments and the changes he noticed in himself, which he attributed to program learning. At the same time, Paulo spoke about how the recognition he received from his supervisor "*gives* [him] a lot of motivation to continue" (demonstrating a Socializing way of knowing).

Unlike other learners, Jeff did not speak very much about his goals during the first interview. At that time, he told us he thought education is important for being a more competent worker and emphasized that the high school diploma is "an important piece of paper" to have. In his experience, employers wanted "to know where you went to school." Jeff reflected on how earning a diploma was important in his role as a Polaroid worker and briefly mentioned it would help him in terms of Polaroid's "AKP" program. At this time, Jeff also spoke about his formal school experiences as a child and teenager and said many were negative learning experiences. However, he contrasted the feelings he had about going to school as a teenager with the sense of excitement he felt about continuing with his education at this point.

At the end of the program, Jeff shared that in deciding to enroll in the program, he knew that he would have to focus his energy, time, and attention to achieve the goal he had held for 20 years.

Earning a high school diploma so he would be able to continue his quest for learning was a priority in his life.

> I've been spending all my time, all my thoughts have been, I been here for the last 18 months. This was my main goal—one of my goals. . . . It's something I've been after for the last 20 years. I started 18 months ago, but think back, I honestly started 36 months ago because I took this course before and started, and I think it was like two months, I quit. Well I didn't quit, but other things came up. And for me to deal with those [things], I couldn't deal with this and get the full satisfaction, but then after I got the other stuff straightened out, I realized that I had made a mistake by not sticking it out and working through. And finishing 36 months ago. That I realized I made a mistake already. That when I applied for the course this time, **that was my main goal, my main focus, was to put everything into this and finish.**

Jeff reflected on the decisions he made to achieve his goal. He had a perspective on his goal of finishing the diploma program and conceptualized it as bigger than just the last 18 months in the program. He took full responsibility for his own process and his decisions. He had the capacity to look to his own internally generated values and prioritize the importance of enrolling in the program.

> Like you just said, there it is, focus. I had to focus solely on this. Because at the time, **this is more important**. . . . Because this is something I've been wanting to for the last 20 years. **The other thing can wait.** . . . No . . . it wouldn't have mattered [if anyone challenged my decision]. . . . I'd finish this. I did finish this.

Jeff looked inward to determine what he wanted to do. He had a strong sense of self-containment that illustrates he knows what and how he thinks about things (and what is best for *him*). Other issues arose for Jeff at work and in his personal life while he was deciding to enroll in the program, yet he knew he had to push them aside to focus on finishing school. Being able to control his own thinking in this way—to push issues aside in his mind and focus on what is most important to him—suggests that he was in charge of his own internal process—he's running it, it is not running him.

In this section, we have illustrated the common and different goals and motivations learners had for enrolling in the program and their similar and different understandings of education's value. For example, many learners initially wanted to earn a high school diploma because they believed it would help them have greater opportunities for promotions at work. All of the non-native speakers of English held an additional goal (which they reported accomplishing) of wanting to become more proficient speakers of English—in addition to achieving their goal of earning an "American diploma." We have shown that several learners wanted to earn a diploma because they felt it would help them be good "role models" for their children. They thought earning a diploma would inspire their children to continue with education and also model their own value for education. Several learners reported being better able to support their children's learning because of what they learned in program classes.

We also illuminated changes in learners' conceptions of their goals and the diploma. Many learners came to see the diploma as more than "a piece of paper" that would make them eligible for job promotions. Some spoke about how the process of earning a diploma changed the way they thought about the value of education. All of the non-native English speakers told us they were better workers because they could express their ideas more clearly both at work and elsewhere in their lives.

Several of these adults told us they felt better able to live in America because of the learning processes they experienced in the program.

Significantly, all participants told us they wanted to continue learning after completing this program. For some, this meant taking more courses, such as writing and computer classes. For others, it meant using the diploma as a steppingstone to higher education or gaining entry into a specialized certificate program. Several learners talked about how earning a diploma helped them be more self-reliant; they reported being better able to learn independently and voiced their desire for becoming lifelong learners.

We have shown not only how learners made sense of their goals, motivations, and aspirations in qualitatively different ways, but also how these evolved as learners participated in the program. Importantly, we have illuminated how many learners' conceptions of their goals and motivations changed as they began to make sense of their experiences with new underlying meaning systems. Understanding that learners make sense of their goals *differently*—depending on and through the lens of their meaning system—can help us better offer them support and challenge as the[illegible]ticipate in ABE programs. For example, creating opportunities for learners to reflect on their [illegible]oth orally and in writing) and perhaps even share these with teachers and/or classmates might help them—and us—better understand what is most important about program learning to each adult. We will discuss this in greater depth in the final section of this chapter.

SECTION III: "GOOD TEACHERS UNDERSTAND THEIR STUDENTS"—A DEVELOPMENTAL VIEW OF THE CHANGES IN HOW LEARNERS CONCEPTUALIZED TEACHER–LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS

What were these learners' expectations for how their program teachers could support their efforts to learn? How, if at all, did their conceptions of what makes for a good teacher change over time?

Here, we will illuminate learners' understanding of the teacher–learner relationship by focusing on how learners understand the teachers' role in their learning process. We will also show how some learners' understandings of this relationship *changed* during the program. Our intention was to understand not only how learners perceived the teacher's work in the classroom, but also to understand the kinds of supports these learners wanted (and expected) from their teachers and considered helpful to their learning. This section, like others in this chapter, is organized by grouping learners according to the underlying meaning system so that we can highlight common patterns in learners' expectations of their teachers. To do this, we first present common themes in how learners who share a particular way of knowing conceptualized the teacher–learner relationship, and then we present excerpts from interviews to illuminate how they made sense of these themes—and how their thinking changed over time.

In our research with this diverse group of learners from different cultures and with different levels of English proficiency, familial background, and values for education, we often wondered how cultural expectations of a teacher's role might influence learners' understanding of their relationships with their teachers and of the teachers' authority. For example, some of our participants came from countries where teachers were highly respected and the ultimate source of knowledge. We wondered how and if cultural expectations might factor into what learners were able and willing to share with us. We also wondered how learners' previous educational and school experiences both here in the United States and in their home countries might shape their experiences in the CEI Adult Diploma Program.

Recent research highlights the need to examine the teacher–learner relationship by focusing on learners' perspectives so that we can better understand the assumptions and expectations learners bring to their learning experiences in ABE classrooms (Quigley, 1997; Taylor, 1996). We suggest that there are important implications for understanding not only learners' expectations for their teachers, but also how learners *make sense* of the their expectations and their relationships with their teachers. In other words, what constitutes support for a learner who makes sense at a particular way of knowing may be experienced as challenge to another learner making sense with a different way of knowing. How might teachers benefit from a deeper understanding of the ways in which learners experience their good and noble efforts to support them?

Importantly, we will show how learners' conceptions of this relationship changed during the program. As Tinberg and Weisberger (1997) remind us:

> Our job as instructors is to both gain a "reading" of where our students are and then to reach out to them in a way that helps them move beyond where they are to where they need to be. (p. 46)

While Tinberg and Weisberger emphasize the benefits of employing constructive developmental theory to better understand learners' experiences in community colleges, we suggest that this lens is equally valuable for understanding learners' experiences in ABE programs. This theory helps us think about how to create learning programs that are dynamic holding environments for supporting learners as they grow from one way of knowing to another.

Most learners, regardless of their ways of knowing, entered the program expressing worries about whether they would feel "comfortable" in the classroom context. Some were "scared" they would not be able to achieve their goal of earning a high school diploma, while others voiced a longing to feel "comfortable asking questions" when they did not understand what the teacher said. Many learners expressed a hopefulness that their teachers would not think they were "stupid" because they could not express themselves well in English (upon program entry). During the program, participants reported feeling "more confident" in their abilities to ask questions, to speak "in front of classmates," and to complete program requirements. All learners entered the program with hopes and expectations about how the four program teachers would support their learning. Table 4 illustrates the ways in which participants across ways of knowing understood the teacher-learner relationship.

Regardless of their meaning systems, participants voiced some common expectations for their teachers' support in their learning. For example, the majority of learners in this sample as well as in the other two site samples thought it was important that teachers "be on time to class" and "speak slowly" so they could understand. However, adults made sense of these experiences differently, depending on their way of knowing.

Table 4: Learners' Constructions of the Teacher–Learner Relationship

Way of Knowing	Learner Expectations for a Good Teacher	Sample Quotations
Instrumental Knowers	For these learners, good teachers are those who show them how to learn. Good teachers *give* them their knowledge and the rules they need to follow to get the right answers. They have learned something because they can do it (demonstrate a behavior) and because they get a good grade (a consequence).	Good teachers "give you that little push," "make me learn," and "explain how do to it, ask you write it down, and you write down exactly how to do it. Then we'd do it."
Instrumental/ Socializing Knowers	For these participants, good teachers explain things to help them understand. Good teachers help them learn by showing them how to do things. Good teachers have rules that they need to follow so they can do things the right way. Good teachers give learners their knowledge; they tell them what they *should* know. These learners know they have learned because they can do something and because the teacher tells them so.	Good teachers "teach me all the time" and "show me the correct way to speak so that others will listen." They "make you understand, like if I don't know something, I ask her, 'Can you repeat it?' Then she explains again." Good teachers say "I have to do it this way because if I don't it's no good." They "make me do writing, speaking. She's good, she's always there."
Socializing Knowers	For these learners, good teachers are those who care about them. Good teachers explain things to help them understand and they really listen and support them. Good teachers *know* what is good for them to know, and they tell them what they *should* know. They describe good teachers as having certain human qualities; good teachers are kind, patient and encouraging. These adults can feel, inside, when they have learned something and the teacher acknowledges them in that.	"If you don't have a good teacher, you're not going to be self-confident." "If [the teacher] doesn't teach you the way you learn good, that doesn't help you." "I ask the teacher to explain to me how I'm going to do it."
Socializing Self-Authoring Knowers	These participants think that good teachers explain things well and help them understand. In their view, good teachers care about students as people; they understand participants' background and that helps when they are learning. Good teachers listen really well and are knowledgeable. Good teachers know what these adults need to learn, and these adults, themselves, know what they want to learn (they feel that they have knowledge inside themselves). They describe good teachers as polite and patient and believe that good teachers help them learn what they need to know in order to pursue their own goals. Good teachers listen to their feedback so that they can improve their teaching.	"I like a soft person . . . who consider when you are asking a question, they answer you, they don't ignore you. That's the kind of person I like to be a good teacher. So they really understand people. They care for their students." Good teachers "keep explaining things in different ways, they show you different ways to learn. I like that technique." I can ask a good teacher "for help with what I know I do and do not understand. . . ." "I think it's very tough for a teacher to teach and listen and explain all the time." Good teachers "do their jobs and help me to do better, I'm proud of that."
Self-Authoring Knowers	For these learners, good teachers are one source of knowledge, and they see themselves and their classmates as other sources. They offer feedback to teachers to help them improve their practices and expect good teachers to listen to feedback. Good teachers use a variety of teaching strategies. They help learners meet their own internally generated goals. These participants *know* that they have learned something and when they have, they can then think of multiple ways to teach what they know to others.	Good teachers "understand their students." "No matter how good a teacher you have, if you don't really want to learn, you're not going to learn nothing." Good teachers "make learning interesting. It has to be interesting to the student." "What you do with knowledge after it's given to you is of your own choosing."

The Instrumental Way of Knowing

> [John, the teacher] used words and **he'd make us write them down, then he'd explain something**. **And he explained how to do it**, you know. And then, he'd make you write it in columns; **you'd write down exactly how to do it.** (***Bill***, March 1998)

Two Polaroid cohort members, Bill and Renada, made sense of their experience in a way that solely reflects an Instrumental way of knowing. First, we will illuminate the commonalties in how they understood what it meant to be a "good teacher" and the teacher's relationship to their learning. Next, we will present interview excerpts to illustrate how they constructed their expectations of and their relationships with their teachers and how these changed during the program. Significantly, upon completing the program, both learners grew to demonstrate an emerging Socializing way of knowing.

Both Bill, a native speaker of English, and Renada, a non-native speaker of English, understood the teacher to be the central authority in the teaching and learning process. For these knowers, it was the teacher's job to *give* learners what they need to learn to master academic content. It was also the teacher's responsibility to teach learners the appropriate steps to follow to succeed in learning. They considered good teachers those who give clear and explicit step-by-step directions for how to proceed with in-class or homework assignments. Like others with different ways of knowing, they told us that teachers support their learning by speaking "slowly" and "clearly." For Bill and Renada, good teachers were willing to take time to "explain" and re-explain if needed (even if it took several different types of explanations). They felt best supported in their learning when teachers used direct, concrete teaching approaches and then gave them multiple opportunities to apply their learning. These learners were preoccupied with learning the rules to follow to demonstrate skills they had learned. Good teachers, they told us, are those who can give them the right skills, facts, and ways of solving problems so they can, in turn, "get the right answers." With this way of knowing, a person constructs knowledge as something that is right or wrong. Teachers give learners knowledge (which is understood as an accumulation of skills and facts—more skills and more information equals more knowledge). For these learners knowing the "right way" to complete academic tasks yields learning.

Bill and Renada assessed their success by grades and test scores assigned by the teacher. They knew they learned something when they were able to perform a task on their own (learning is defined by demonstrating) and when the teacher, an external authority, gave them a good grade. A teacher's job, from their perspectives, is to "give me" the information I need, or to "show me the steps I need to follow," so that "I can do it." This is how they know they have learned something—they can demonstrate a behavior. Teachers are the authorities who have "right" skills and knowledge to be given to learners. As authorities, they evaluate learners' work. It is their job to "correct" learners' mistakes; help them pronounce words; fix their spelling, grammar, and sentence structure; and teach them the rules they need to know to solve academic problems. If a person follows the teacher's rules or directions and does "what they are supposed to do," an Instrumental knower feels she should get a good grade (i.e., the external reward). Learners with this way of knowing told us that if they put the time into their studies, the direct result would be learning the skills that had been taught.

For example, in the first interview, when an interviewer asked Bill what makes a "good teacher," he paused and said "That's a toughie." Bill continued by talking about his prior school experiences, in which he said he did not learn anything. He then stated what makes a good teacher.

> A real good teacher would, given the time, would explain something to somebody completely. I mean, they're not gonna, um, I know, like in school right now, you've

> got a teacher, she's got 40 kids, she can't go to everyone individually and do it, boom, boom, boom. And this teacher here is gonna have what 17, 12 of us? . . . I know she can't come and say, sit down with some of the people who can't speak English and explain things to 'em a hundred percent, because it will make everybody start getting bored, waiting. But a good teacher will be able to either take that person aside at the end of class, talk to them, or give them that extra 2–3 minutes just to explain that one thing that they don't get. A good teacher would do that. Be able to explain it. You know, right then and there, without keeping everybody waiting, and waiting, and waiting. I guess that's what I want to say. Either you get it or you don't, you know? Some people need extra help, of course. Especially the people who don't speak English. 'Cause that's the only problem that I see with it, as far as "I don't understand." Like if I went to [another country], I wouldn't understand either. So I understand that they don't understand a lot.

For Bill, good teachers are those who are able to "explain" concepts very well to their students. Although he realized that non-native speakers of English had different learning needs, Bill nevertheless wanted the teacher to attend to *his needs for learning*. Bill seemed to focus on his concrete needs to learn from the teacher in the classroom. Bill did not yet orient to or relate to an inner or abstract experience of what comprises a good teacher (evidence for this is the absence of such language).

During our first interview with Renada we asked her about the qualities of a good teacher. For Renada, good teachers are those who "try to give" her the information she needs to be able to demonstrate a particular skill. She told us that "good teachers" make "good students," demonstrating that she understood the teacher–learner relationship in a cause-and-effect way. In other words, she thought that it is the teacher's responsibility to transmit information or "give" information to the learners so they can then demonstrate their ability to *do* the academic task or demonstrate the behavior on their own. For both Bill and Renada, teachers who "explained" a concept well and repeatedly, and those who gave clear and explicit directions as to how to accomplish tasks, were the best kind of teachers—the kind that *made them learn*.

Our second series of interviews took place after learners had completed their first trimester in the program. At that time, we invited Bill to tell us how the teachers in the program were supporting his learning. Bill shared a story about how John, the math teacher during the first trimester, had "made learning fun" by both "bringing things in" to the classroom that helped learners to grasp mathematical concepts and by having a lot of "energy." As part of a math lesson (which we observed), John gave groups of learners M&M's and invited them to calculate the percentage of different colored M&M's in the bags of M&M's he gave to the groups. After they had finished doing the calculations, learners ate the candy—a reward that also made learning fun, from Bill's perspective. Bill spoke about the ways John supported his learning.

> He brought in the M&M's [in math class]. He . . . brought in things, you know, it wasn't just all the same, it wasn't just, "Okay, here's the math. Go ahead and do it." You know . . . he'd **explain** things, and you know, and John was good. He'd talk to you**, and he'd give you the individual attention if you needed it**. You know, and he'd run around that room—John had a lot of energy, you could feel him. He'd run, you know—he'd go from every person, one-to-one. And then [he would say], "No! Come on, you know how to do this!" You know, it ain't like, "Oh, now we've

> showed you this. If you can't get it, we'll have to have some extra work or something," you know? John will say, you know, "Come on, you can do this! Come on! Try it!" And then [he would] . . . help ya, just to **give you that little push**. Yeah, he was good. I liked him.

Bill emphasized how important it was to him that John made learning "fun" and that he had an "energy" which he brought to the classroom. He tells us that what made John a teacher who supported his learning was John's willingness to invest extra time to help him by giving him the explanation and "extra attention" he needed to learn. When asked about the kinds of supports John provided that facilitated his learning, Bill listed the *behaviors* that John exhibited in the classroom (going around the room with "a lot of energy," "making learning fun," and "explaining"). Bill also mentioned that John provided a source of external motivation for his learning; it seems that John's patient way of explaining and repeating explanation gave Bill the external "push" he needed to learn. The "push" seemed to be experienced by Bill as encouragement and a form of support.

Toward the end of this second interview, Bill told us more about how a good teacher facilitates his learning. He points to a variety of John's behaviors that helped Bill to learn—or in Bill's words, "made [him] understand."

> He made you think. And he used words and **he'd make us write them down, then he'd explain something. And he explained how to do it,** you know. And then, he'd make you write it in columns; **you'd write down *exactly* how to do it.** "Take the top number. Subtract it." Blah-blah, whatever—divide—add—and then, then you'd get that problem right. And you [would learn] how [to] do it—**when you do it on your little quiz.** He made us take quizzes every day, you could use your notes, go back and look at your notes. Go back and see which one you did. See how you did it. **And then we'd do it.** . . . And then he'd say, "Okay, let's try it without the book." And then we'd do it at, for, without the book, and he'd show us one or two. "Class, who'd I say can do it?" "Okay." And he'd cover the thing. "Alright. Go ahead. Here's the problem." And he'd put a problem up try and explain exactly what you did right and wrong. He was an enthusiast.

Bill explained how John's behaviors supported his learning process; he "explained" things to Bill and Bill's classmates, he used "words" that made learning "fun," and he *made* the learners write down "exactly" how to complete the math problems. This step-by-step procedure, along with clear instructions and repeated explanation, was supportive to Bill's learning. Bill experienced John's teaching practices, which included scaffolding learners by allowing them to use their notes when first completing quizzes and later asking them to complete the quizzes without the notes, as a supportive way for John to teach. Bill articulates a set of observable behaviors that good teachers exhibit.

Both Bill and Renada felt supported by the teachers' efforts to make themselves available for extra help after class and sometimes on weekends. During the third interview, Bill described a time a few weeks earlier when he was seriously considering "quitting" the program. He told us how John, the math and science teacher, "made [him] stay."

> He said to me, "Don't quit." He told me to come back. "You're doing good. We appreciate your being here." . . . I enjoyed the hell out of his math class. . . . I hate homework, but I enjoyed math class. I like science. I hate science—it was just him. **He made me want to be there**. And he offered to help me fix my computer. He

> said "I'll take a look at it. I'm not promising nothing." He's **offered to be there Saturdays for us**—"I'll do whatever I can, come to my house." He gave us his home phone number, "If you ever need anything at all, call me." To me, he's been like, he's been real good. . . . [He] **made me come back**. I said, "Okay, I'll just give it another shot." [*Why do you think him saying that mad such a difference to you?*] **I don't know. I don't know**. He could have said to me, "Well, you know, it's too bad you have to, if you have to, it's too bad." Reading from the script. He could have said what everybody else probably would have said as far as I'm concerned. "Well that's too bad," but he come right out and said "Don't, don't quit. Come on, stick it out. We can work something out." **It was important to him that I stay**. **He gets paid whether I'm there or not.** He didn't think like that, as far as I'm concerned. He thought come back, this is important for you to be here. **It was important to him for me to be there as far as I'm concerned**. But then again, if none of us are here, he wouldn't have a job, right?

When we asked Bill to tell us why John's encouragement meant so much to him and why it helped him to continue in the program, Bill responded by saying, "I don't know." He then focused on the concrete reality that John, as a teacher, "gets paid whether I'm there or not." While Bill described this experience in concrete terms, he said he felt it was important to John that he stay in the program. Bill was beginning to acknowledge the relationship itself as being important—which marked an important change in how Bill understood the teacher–learner relationship (a newly emerging Socializing way of knowing was evident).

Also, during the last interviews with Bill and Renada just before graduation, we noticed subtle but important shifts in their understandings of what makes for a good teacher. For example, Bill's understanding of his relationship with his teacher, Judith, was also shifting. Bill was beginning to view Judith, the Life Employment Workshop teacher, as an external authority whom he relied upon *to judge himself and his ability as a student*. Bill's changed construction of what makes for a good teacher demonstrates that he no longer only held the expectation that teachers were transmitters of knowledge, creators of rules, and instructors who gave him "the right way" to complete academic tasks. At this point, the teacher's opinions about him mattered in a way they had not previously (he was beginning to grow toward a Socializing way of knowing).

For example, in the last interview, when we asked him about the best way for him to learn, Bill responded by telling us that Judith had told him he "never learned how to learn" when he was in school. He seemed to look to Judith as a valued other—someone whose opinions were beginning to shape the way Bill viewed himself as a learner. Judith's feedback seemed to matter to him in a new way. Later in this interview, Bill talked more about what he thought made a good teacher and spoke about the ways in which the teachers supported him. In this passage, he illuminates his new understanding.

> A really good teacher? One who stays on you a little. I mean, they can't just, I know they're talking to 16 of us, but these teachers, every one of them, make **a valid effort to take care of us one at a time.** . . . There was [no teacher] who said, "Well I, we can't do this, there was always somebody that would give you extra [help], they'd come early, they'd stay late." Every one of the teachers helped you; no matter what you had to do, they'd help you. Even if you weren't, **not just**

> **because you were in their program or nothing, just cuz they wanted you to learn. And that's the way I felt about them.**

Along with the list of teachers' *behaviors* that helped him meet his learning needs, Bill made it clear that he "felt" teachers were helping him and other learners not only because it was part of their jobs, but because they *cared* about the learners. For the first time, we note glimmers of Bill's newly developing capacity to construct his relationship with his teachers not simply in terms of what the teachers can do for him. Bill's thinking demonstrates a change from his earlier thinking in that he not only described what the teachers did for him (i.e., their behaviors), but also spoke about their generosity in continually supporting learners. He tells us he knew the teachers went beyond their formal roles by offering learners many different kinds of support, and he also voiced the concern he "felt" the teachers had for all learners in the program. This demonstrates the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing.

Renada also demonstrated a change in her thinking, which we noticed during the last interview with her. When Renada spoke about the qualities of a good teacher during our first interview, she said they are teachers who "try to give" to her, and "they try really hard to teach us." During the last interview, in response to our question about what makes a good teacher, Renada told us that good teachers are "friendly." Good teachers, in Renada's view, "Make you feel good when they come and they talk to you. So you learn, and you don't [learn] if your teacher is not friendly." Good teachers do more than provide learners the essentials to perform their academic tasks, Renada told us; good teachers made her "feel good," and she experienced this relational aspect of feeling good as support as a learner. Renada demonstrates hints of a capacity to recognize an internal or abstract psychological experience; she spoke about the relational qualities of the teacher–learner relationship (demonstrating the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing).

The Instrumental/Socializing Transitional Way of Knowing

> I really know that when I have a good teacher who asks you to ask a question and tell you what to do, and keep you free, and then get your mind relaxed and then do the material you were asked to do. (***Sal***, March 1998)

Seven of the cohort learners made sense of their experience with an Instrumental/ Socializing way of knowing (2/3 or 3/2). At program completion, we noted changes in the meaning systems of three of these learners: Sal, Hope, and Rita. We will first illuminate themes in how these learners understood their relationships with their teachers. Next, we will highlight the changes in their constructions as they participated in the program.

Like Bill and Renada, these learners wanted their teachers to explain things well and speak at a rate they could understand. It remained important that teachers provide concrete approaches to facilitate learning; however, they also looked to their teachers as *experts* who tell them what they *should know*. Teachers working with these learners can offer support to learners by assuming the role of an expert or guide who has patience and can help learners understand. While Bill and Renada saw the teacher as someone who "makes you learn" by teaching step-by-step procedures, these learners in transition to the Socializing way of knowing were concerned with the relational aspects of the teacher–learner relationship. It was important that teachers are "patient" and "nice," and that *they help learners to feel comfortable* rather than scared to ask questions when they do not understand. These learners spoke often about the importance of having a "respectful" relationship with teachers. Acceptance from the teacher was paramount, and it enabled learners to feel at ease rather than "ashamed" when asking questions. These learners

- see teachers as people who model good behaviors, and these learners seek their teachers' approval.
- understand that *both* teachers and peers can give support.
- want teachers to value their ideas and themselves, to really listen to them, and to care.
- place importance on how teachers treat students and on being respected by their teachers.
- value teachers' caring manner and connection to learners.
- are unlikely to critique or challenge teachers and/or their practices because this would be experienced as threatening to one's self—opinions of valued others, including the teacher, make up the way these learners feel about themselves.
- begin to voice feelings of "being proud" of their teachers.

Learners who make sense of their experience in this way internalize the perspectives of valued others. Importantly, these learners expected teachers *to help them understand*.

For example, Teresina demonstrated a change in the way she understood the teacher–learner relationship during the course of the program. While Teresina thought good teachers "make" her do her homework, she saw the teacher-learner relationship as mutual. During the first interview, Teresina told us that it was important to her that she not only learn from her teachers, but also that her teachers "learn something" from her. At the same time, Teresina said that good teachers exhibit certain behaviors (e.g., good teachers talk "clearly and slowly") that enhance learning. It was also important to her that good teachers are "patient" and do not "get mad" if a learner asks questions. Having teachers who were willing to repeat their teachings so she could understand a concept was important to her. Teresina also told us that good teachers help her "feel comfortable."

In the second interview, Teresina told us why she thought John was a good teacher; he helped her learn because he had "patience," explained things "clearly," and "repeated" what was said until she understood. In addition to naming the concrete behaviors that, in her view, make for a good teacher (e.g., good teachers "come to class on time" and "have everything organized"), Teresina valued the two-way nature of the teacher–learner relationship. For Teresina good teachers were those who are "going to understand me, and I understand the teacher. . . . She's going to repeat every question. . . . She has the patience to repeat [herself]." Teresina considered good teachers' concrete behaviors important and oriented to the reciprocal nature of the teacher–learner relationship.

When she was asked in the last interview what makes a good teacher, Teresina said:

> I think that [teaching] is hard job too, because sometimes you have students that don't care. They don't do the homework, they just go to play [in the] classroom. But the teachers, you have to respect them just like your mother or father because they spent their time to teach you something that's good for you later. Probably now you don't see the results [from] the teacher tell[ing] you to doing homework.

Teresina discussed the importance of respecting the teacher and had some capacity for abstract thinking. She compared the respect a person *should* give teachers to the respect a person *should* give her mother and father. Teresina thought good teachers were teaching her something that would be helpful later. In this passage, we see she appreciates her teachers' experience; she saw their work as a "hard job" and understood that they invested their time to help the students.

Instrumental/Socializing Learners' Focus on Teachers' Behaviors & the Relational Qualities of the Learner–Teacher Relationship

Several learners who demonstrated this way of knowing not only talked about the importance of having good teachers who "speak slowly" and "explain" concepts well but also oriented to good teachers' interpersonal and abstract qualities. Good teachers are "patient," "kind," "caring," and "honest." These learners spoke repeatedly about how their relationships with their teachers made a difference in their learning. Their perspectives highlight the importance of the relational aspects and human connections between learner and teacher;[5] Helena, Angelina, Hope, Veronica, and Teresina are learners who spoke emphatically about how good teachers treat learners with "respect," "listen" to learners, and "care" about them. Being valued and respected by teachers mattered greatly to them. We present Helena's case to exemplify how this kind of caring served as a support to learning.

> Helena had formulated ideas and opinions about what makes for a good teacher.
>
> The problem, some teachers teach you good, but some don't. You know, like here, like, for three years, I don't like my teacher. I don't learn nothing. I told my friends, I say, "I don't like that teacher." Before I had two teachers, really good. I do really great. That one I have two years, I don't like him. **Because sometimes teacher doesn't care about you. You know, they don't teach you like to learn.** Like, when I started here [at Polaroid], I tell her [a teacher from a different program] I wanted writing, I wanted pronunciation, because I have bad pronunciation. . . . So [I] wanted all those kinds of . . . but sometimes she go to school, sometimes she don't; she don't call me. She supposed to give like two day week, and she changed for one day, she don't go every week. [*How about the one you learned really well from. What made that good?*] **Because she is all the time on time, she's all the time teach me. If she have something to do, she call me. But most times she's there, all the time.** (PI #1, pp. 11–12)

Helena spoke about the value she placed on the teacher–learner relationship and how she learned better when it is good—when the teacher "cares" about her. In addition to naming good teachers' concrete behaviors (e.g., being "on time"), Helena also discussed how she sees teaching and learning as relational process built on respect. She echoed this idea in her subsequent discussion of a positive learning experience.

> The way she talking, like, when I don't know, I don't say something right. She's all the time trying to tell me, "Oh you have to say it, you know, like this." Because a lot of time I speak I don't put "s." Sometimes I don't use the last "d." She told me, "You have to use it, you have to use it." . . . Cause she say I have to use it. I have to use it because if I don't use it, it's no good. If I don't use it I don't speak good English. Like, when you start writing, she say "The first letter you supposed to put

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[5] Hope and Teresina spoke about the relational qualities of their teachers. Initially, each demonstrated a 2/3 way of knowing (Instrumental way of knowing was leading). Toward the end of the program we assessed Hope's meaning making to be 3/2. Although we will not discuss excerpts from her data here, she also talked about the mutual "trust" and "respect" that is essential between teachers and learners. Helena, Angelina, and Veronica demonstrated a 3/2 way of knowing.

> in capital letter." . . . Because I want to speak good English. I don't want to speak bad English, because you know, when you speak, people listen to you. (PI #1, pp.12–13)

Helena discussed the importance of learning to pronounce words the "correct way" and why it was important to her: so that "people will listen." She, like many of the Polaroid learners, voiced this desire and need. In stating why learning to pronounce words the correct way was important to her, Helena highlighted not only her concrete need to want to speak the "right" way, but also her interpersonal need: speaking English more fluently will enable her to make connections with people. A positive relationship with her teacher helped her feel "comfortable" learning from her. Helena's reference to "the way" the teacher corrects her seems to speak to a respect Helena felt from her teacher. She looked to her teacher as a valued authority guiding her learning. For Helena, a good teacher "cares" and helps her acquire the language skills she needs to have other people "listen" to her.

Helena, Veronica, Hope, and Angelina told us that good teachers "make you understand." In addition to helping learners acquire skills, good teachers, in Helena's view, are "always there." In this first interview, Helena echoed several key themes we heard from other learners who made sense of their experience in this way of knowing. Helena explained:

> Because she give me homework and **she give me, you know, she make me writing**. She speaking, we speaking. You know, she's good. **She's always there. You know, I like the way she teaches.** You know, some teachers you know make you understanding, like, if you don't understand something, **they make you understand it.** . . . Like, if I don't understand something, I tell you, "Can you repeat it again, I don't understand you." Then she explains again. (PI #1, p. 13–14)

Helena indicated that a good teacher helps her to feel comfortable so she can ask questions and gain an understanding of what she's studying. For Helena, learning was the result of a one-to-one exchange with someone who *cares* about her.

Like Bill, Helena stated that a good teacher "pushes" the student. However, Helena experienced and named the "push" teachers gave her as a demonstration of their caring.

> He's the kind of teacher, he **push**, you know, I don't mean he push too much, **but you have to let them . . . to teach you, push you little bit to make sure you learn**. Because some teachers doesn't **care.** (PI #1, p 18)

While the source of some of her motivation was external, Helena understood the teacher's "push" as a caring expression of interest in her and her learning. At the same time, a good teacher was also someone who could help learners meet concrete, practical needs by "show[ing]" the student what to do. In the last interview, she spoke about a good teacher as someone who requires a lot from students. Helena responded to the interviewer's question about the best way for her to learn by speaking about the teacher–learner relationship.

> I say the best way for me to learn if you have a good teacher to teach you. **To care about you, to care about you, then to teach you to make you understand.** Because like Judith [the Life Employment Workshop teacher], you have to learn from her, too. Because when she give you homework, you have to do it, you don't have no excuse. So that one make you learn more because like, okay, you go

> someplace on the weekend and say, "Oh, I have to do my homework when I go to school," Judith is going to say something, because she don't play. So you have to do it . . . and she never forget that, yes. She collect all the homework we do. She collect the homework, you don't have no choice, you have to do. . . . For me, I think is a good teacher, I don't complain about that. **Because a teacher like that make you learn—like, if you have teacher don't care, so, you not gonna learn. I see they care, you learn.** (PI #4, p. 7–8)

Helena's case highlights how these learners in our sample, experienced "care" as an essential quality in the teacher–learner relationship. This caring was experienced as a support to their learning. Helena understood the teacher to be a valued authority, and she also saw a direct relationship between a teacher's caring actions and her learning.

The Socializing Way of Knowing

> If you don't have a good teacher and you're not going to be self-confident. (***Rita***, September 1998)

While 11 cohort learners had this way of knowing operating in combination with other ways of knowing, only Toungh and Pierre had a singly operating Socializing way of knowing at the program's start[6] and completion. Rita demonstrated an Instrumental/Socializing way of knowing at the program's start and grew to have a singly operating Socializing meaning system. First, we will present the themes that were consistent in how these learners made sense of the teacher–learner relationship, and then we will present learners' voices to illustrate how individuals made sense of these themes and highlight the changes in their thinking during the program.

One of the strengths of the Socializing way of knowing is that a person now has the developmental capacity to internalize and identify with the perspectives of others. These learners in our sample were not only interested in fulfilling their teachers' expectations of them, they also *identified* with their teachers' expectations of them. They did not have the capacity to separate their own expectations for their learning from their teachers' expectations. In other words, their teachers' goals for learning became their *own* goals. These cohort learners viewed the teacher as a source of authority; however, they experienced the teacher as a supportive and encouraging guide who "helped" them understand.

These learners valued the relational aspect of the teacher–learner relationship and spoke about good teachers as those who "cared" about them and took an interest in them as people. The teachers' genuine care and concern mattered—it facilitated their learning. They talked about good teachers as people who are "kind," "patient," and encouraging. For example, in the first interview, Pierre told us that good teachers are "patient" and able to "explain things clearly" to students. In the last interview, Pierre praised his teachers and provided specific examples of how they were helpful: Good teachers display certain types of behavior and have certain human qualities. For example, they "stay after [the program ends each day] to help" learners with work, and they correct written work an provide feedback. Pierre, like others who make meaning in this way, focused on the relational components that make good teachers: they motivate people to learn, and show they "care."

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[6] As mentioned previously, Henry exhibited a fully operating Socializing way of knowing at the program's start. In July 1999, we assessed his meaning making to be 3(4). He dropped out of the program after the first trimester, he said, because he was not able to secure a ride from his own nearby company (where he worked) to Polaroid's Norwood plant, where program classes were held.

Many of these learners spoke about the importance of having a respectful relationship with their teachers and how this facilitated their learning. For example, in the second interview, Pierre elaborated on why John was a good teacher—"he knows his job," and "he's explaining like he's at school also." Like other learners with this meaning system, Pierre viewed the teacher as another learner in the classroom and talked about how John's ability to "explain" made learning accessible to all learners. He observed that John provided "everything, every angle to find the result, he knows about it and explains everywhere." At this time, Pierre also told us he believed the teachers in the Polaroid program were of high quality saying, "I know a committee of this group know how the best ability to teach. So they're [Polaroid] not going to send us anybody. I know whoever came on board [as a teacher is going] to be good." Like other learners with this way of knowing, Pierre viewed the teachers as experts.

These learners voiced appreciation for their teachers' demonstrations of caring about them as people and "helping" them learn. They looked to the teacher—and their authority—to "know" when they had learned something and to tell them what they needed to learn. In addition to wanting teachers to be "patient" and give "clear and slow" explanations, these learners focused on the interpersonal relationships they had with their teachers, and their academic efforts were directed toward pleasing these important others. For example, it was important to Pierre that teachers were approachable, and he also seemed to value the teacher's ability to *know* what is good for him.

> **I think, to me, the teacher . . . has [to have] enough experience to figure out what's good for me**. Because first of all, I must be able to talk to the teachers, explain my[self]. Maybe she might explain me, or he or she might explain me something today, that teacher might think I got it the same time, it might take me two, three times to really . . . kept what he or she told me.

Pierre, like other learners with this way of knowing, expected the teacher to anticipate his needs and to know what is "good" for him. His perceptions of himself as a learner are connected to how the teacher *feels* about him. A good teacher understands he may need multiple opportunities to learn something and is willing to explain things several times. Also like other learners, Pierre appreciated when teachers gave him concrete examples to help him understand.

> Because I think the teacher would know also, but give me some, like any, like example, give me that building, and explain how that building start from the foundation to the roof. And now going to figure out if all the . . . **the idea might be good, but the phrases and the verb are supposed to be here, I put it here**. And here supposed to be past tense, I put the present tense, or things like that. (PI #1, p. 16)

In all of our interviews with Pierre, he told us he expected teachers to "know" what they are doing, so he felt he did not need to think a lot about their role. When asked in the first interview how teachers think about their "job as teachers," he replied, "Oh, I don't have no idea about that." He added that, over time, the teacher is "going to figure out the right way to make [you] learn." This illustrates Pierre's (and other Socializing knowers') conception of the teacher–learner relationship; he viewed the roles as learner and teacher as givens. His role was to learn from the teacher, and he expected the teacher to *know* what to do to help him.

When we asked these learners whether they might want to change anything about the program or their teachers' teaching, in only a few instances did they voice any criticism of their teachers or challenge their teaching practices. For example, the only criticism that Rita had about her experience in the program was that she "wished it were longer." Challenging or criticizing a valued other or authority figure is a threat to the self for someone with this way of knowing. However, there is an opportunity to offer these learners support by encouraging them to voice their thinking in classroom contexts. By supportively challenging these learners, they may grow, over time, to have greater self-authorship in presenting their ideas and opinions. We also observed that these learners talked less about their relationship with their teachers than the learners who made sense of their experience with other ways of knowing. One explanation may be that, as mentioned earlier in describing how Pierre understands other people's evaluations of him, at this way of knowing, a person is defined by the expectations and opinions of others.

For example, Rita did not talk specifically about the other teachers as much as the other participants did (i.e., those learners who made sense of their experiences at other way of knowing). Also, unlike most other learners in the Polaroid cohort, Rita did not seem to be particularly attached to any one of the program teachers. We also noted that she did not seem to favor one class over the others, as most learners in this cohort did. In our second interview, Rita shared her thinking about what makes a good teacher.

> **If you don't have a good teacher and you're not going to be self-confident.** Because if she, you came over here to learn. If she didn't teach you the way that you learn good, that doesn't help you. You're just like, you park your car in the parking lot, you walk in the building and you walk out. (PI #2, p. 15)

For Rita, a good teacher can *make* a student self confident; in her view, without a good teacher, you *won't* be self confident. Rita's feelings about herself are intimately tied to how a teacher feels about her. A teacher who does not teach the way Rita needs to learn is one who "doesn't help."

Rita looked to friends, family, cohort colleagues, and authority figures (teachers, CEI program administrators) for encouragement, support, and acceptance. In the passage below, Rita shared how she managed the struggles she encountered when learning new material in the program. Not only did Rita voice appreciation for the ways her teachers were available to help her by explaining how to "do it" when she did not understand, she also spoke about how important it was to know that her teachers and the CEI program administrators took an interest in her as a person. Rita experienced their willingness to help and support her as genuine demonstrations of care and concern not only for her academic progress, but also for her well-being. Rita voiced her appreciation in this way:

> Because we had troubles, especially with math, like algebra and those kind of trouble, all of us, and every time the teacher gave us the homework, we struggled at home. **Sometime I had to make phone calls to my friends**. Sometimes they didn't understand themselves, and I had half homework done and half undone, **[I] ask teacher to explain to me how I'm going to do it. But, you know, we did step by step until I learned all the process which, for me, is great.** . . . I didn't know a lot of thing about American history before because I never had a book to read, and I never ask nobody for a certain thing. But now, thank God, I learn a lot from them, and every time I had any question, **I always ask my teacher, and he always explain, and I think this is wonderful.** [Everything] with this program, with all the support from CEI because they help us a lot too, you know. **Every time they**

> [CEI people] **come over here, they always encourage us to step forward. If you have any problem, ask teacher, ask us.** We will be able to help you guys in any problem that you have, especially [Mary, the program director]. She always said, if you have any problem, pick up the phone, and give me a call. **You know, if you put all those things together, it would make a lot of difference, a lot of difference.**

Notice that Rita assumed greater responsibility for asking her teachers for help. The encouragement she felt from her teachers and others at CEI seemed to provide the support she needed to continue to seek help when she did not understand.

By the last interview, Rita elaborated on her thinking about good teachers. They were not only people who could teach skills by offering "good explanations," they also needed to be role models and friends.

> Explanation. Attendance. **Role model**. . . . And **friendship** because, you know, every time you have a good communication with teacher, **I think you learn better**. All of them was polite. And every time you ask them something, they always gave you a **good explanation**. I think that was very good for us.

For Rita, good relationships with her teacher facilitated learning—they were intertwined. She perceived these interpersonal connections as important supports.

Rita's case is emblematic of how learners with this way of knowin[illegible]ortance on the relational aspects of the teacher–learner relationship. Most viewed their te[illegible]" and defined good teachers as those who cared about them as people. They conn[illegible] teacher's actions to their ability to make progress toward learning goals.

The Socializing/Self-Authoring Way of Knowing &
Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

> The teacher can describe their job by saying "I'm a good teacher . . . I'm patient. I'm kind . . . I'm friendly." So, teacher is really humble. . . . I don't know what to say anymore. Because the teacher must have more in their minds, you know what I mean, to see than I do because I don't know. (***Christopher***, March 1998)

At the program's beginning, four cohort learners demonstrated a Self-Authoring way of knowing operating in combination with a Socializing way of knowing. Of these, three learners (Paulo, Daniel, and Magda) changed their ways of knowing. Jeff, who demonstrated a fully and solely operating Self-Authoring way of knowing at both the beginning and end of the program, will also be discussed in this section. Table 5 shows our assessments of their ways of knowing at the beginning and end of the program.

Table 5: Learners' with a Socializing/Self-Authoring & Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

Learner	Way of Knowing @ Program Start & Finish
Christopher	3/4 – 3/4

Paulo	3(4) to 3/4 ↗
Daniel	3/4 to 4/3 ↗
Magda	3/4 to 4/3 ↗
Jeff	4 – 4

We first present themes that were consistent in how these learners made sense of what it means to be a good teacher and their understandings of the teacher–learner relationship. Next, we will present learners' voices to illustrate these themes and illuminate how their thinking about the themes changed during the program. One strength of this meaning-making system is that Self-Authoring knowers can take a perspective on interpersonal relationships—rather than "being made up by" relationships (Kegan, 1982).

These learners were able to see not only their teachers as authorities and sources of knowledge, but also themselves and others as sources of knowledge. Like many other learners, they respected their teachers and voiced appreciation for the ways their teachers employed different strategies to meet the needs of learners with different learning styles. For example, in the first interview, Christopher, originally from the Caribbean, told us that good teachers are "humble" and "patient," and have certain characteristics (i.e., good teachers "consider you," and "don't ignore you"). His understanding about what makes a good teacher highlights his orientation to the learner–teacher relationship—good teachers demonstrate that they "care" about the students as people and good teachers are knowledgeable.

> Humble, a humble person, not a rude person, not a rude teacher. I like a soft person . . . who consider when you are asking a question, they answer you, they don't ignore you. That's the kind of person I like to be a good teacher. So they really understand people. They care for their student. And then, I think that's it. [*I wonder how you think a teacher would describe her job or his job?*] An important thing, it's good to describe your job. Like, is something very serious for he or her, whatever. The teacher can describe their job by saying, "I'm a good teacher . . . I'm patient, I'm kind, you know. I'm friendly." So, teacher is really humble, you know what I mean? I don't know what to say anymore. Because the teacher must have more in their minds, you know what I mean, to see than I do because I don't know. (PI #1, p. 11)

In the third interview, Christopher elaborated on his understanding of what makes a good teacher. After completing two trimesters, Christopher was able to draw from experience to better explain his thinking. He discussed John as an example of a good teacher.

> [John] always shows you things on the board. And he's a talker. He's always talking. He's a good explainer. . . . He kept explain[ing] all of the time, all of the time. Really try to put it inside your mind. . . . **He shows you different ways.** . . . Like I'm doing tax, which is very good . . . he shows you a different way, which is a good technique for him, too, I think. Because it's a good technique to teach. Because sometimes if you really can't explain, you know, what you mean and demonstrate at the same time, that's a different thing. But this is a good idea, too

> . . . just to let people know. And then for you to learn, too, you know, if people really mean—I mean, understand what you mean, you know what I mean. What are saying, things like that, you know? (PI #3, p. 6)

Like other learners, Christopher appreciated John's ability to use a variety of teaching "techniques" so all learners could understand. As the above excerpt illustrates, he, like other learners with this way of knowing, reflects on how his teacher's teaching techniques are working in the classroom. All of these learners were also able to reflect to varying degrees on their teachers' teaching and offer constructive feedback to their teachers. As we discussed in Chapter Six, Jeff and Daniel shared with John how he could alter his good teaching practices to better meet the needs of the class. Not only do these learners reflect on their teachers' teaching practices, they also took a perspective on their fellow classmates' needs. Like Socializing knowers, these learners voiced appreciation for their teachers who used a variety of teaching strategies in their practice.

Unlike Rita and Pierre, who are Socializing knowers, these learners were concerned with meeting their *own goals* and standards for learning on behalf of what they see as their larger learning purposes. Many talked about how good teachers supported them in meeting their internally generated goals. They looked to themselves and their *own expectations* for learning and, therefore, took greater responsibility for their learning in and outside the classroom. For example, Christopher talked about how he understood his relationship to the teacher's authority before he entered the program. While he felt comfortable asking a teacher for help and telling her what he "does and does not understand," he could not "tell a teacher what to do. Because I'm only a student." Christopher recognized a power structure, but we did not probe his thinking to better understand why he thought it exists.

> **I don't think I can tell a teacher what to do**. . . . Because if I knew, if I knew. Because if I had to tell a teacher what to do while I'm here…maybe I can say to the teacher, "I don't understand this. I don't understand that." **I don't think I can tell a teacher what to do. Because I'm only a student, you know.** (PI #1, p. 11)

Later, at the end of the study (June 1999), Christopher talked again about the teacher and about his own behavior toward the teacher, making it clear that he knew what made a supportive learning environment.

> **I need a good teacher**. I always need a good teacher because I don't like to talk a lot, you know, so when I'm asking question, **I make sure my question is important**, you know. . . . If I want to ask a question, I make sure there is something to talk about. There always something . . . to talk about a question, but some of them doesn't make sense. **I always make sure mine is making sense**. . . . **A good teacher asks you . . . good question—make you more relaxing . . . you feel proud of yourself. You feel comfortable.** So, because the teacher is not "well," you know, he's not kind of person you're afraid of to approach to, to ask something, to talk something, to mention something—some kind of stuff. . . . This isn't gonna help. . . . When the teacher is not . . . a hundred percent friendly, . . . who is there for you. Some teacher, I don't know, I can see some [inaudible], **but not a hundred percent friendly** . . . **who is there for you**. Some teacher, I don't know. . . . **You need a good person to teach you, just to—to feel free**. And learning stuff. (PI #4, p. 20)

Like other learners with this way of knowing, Christopher looked to himself rather than the teacher to determine whether or not his questions were "important" and "good." He had an internally generated system for assessing this. At the same time, and like others with this way of knowing, he appreciated teachers offering help when he was struggling and also mentioned that a teacher's human qualities were important to him because they helped him decide whether he could approach a particular teacher. Christopher experienced this kind of support from teachers as helping him achieve his own goals for learning—which helped him "feel free." He demonstrates both a Socializing and Self-Authoring way of knowing in the way he constructs his relationship with his teachers.

These learners talked with us about their own ideas about (i.e., theories) what makes a good teacher and sometimes tested these theories in the CEI Adult Diploma Program classrooms. Christopher provides us with an excellent example. He had a theory about learning and teaching in the classroom, and during the third trimester (February 1999), Christopher shared his understanding of a teacher's role and what the teacher can and cannot do (i.e., what he has "figured out"). He had a perspective on school and the teacher's work, and he articulated it in the passage below. Christopher framed his larger perspective as a theory rather than as a series of stories without a guiding thread. Here, he carefully guides the thread for us all.

> **Because what I figured out—I think it's very tough for a teacher to teach and explain at the same time**. Okay, listen now, okay, we are talking now, alright? I'm talking now and then you listen and people listen to what we say. . . . So, by the way, when they stop me for a question . . . so my mind go to a different way now. I have to focus, you know what I mean? **I have to focus, to really focus very hard for not losing the things, . . . losing my mind before that question**. (PI #3, p. 17)

In this passage, Christopher demonstrates that he can both *hold* this kind of theory about thinking and *articulate* it as a theory (demonstrations of a Self-Authoring way of knowing).

Unlike those who looked to the teacher as the authority on what they needed to do in order to learn, these learners recognized that teaching is a complex process, and many were able to take a metaperspective on their classroom experiences. Several voiced appreciation for the additional time their teachers spent with them to help them gain information or learn processes so they could move toward their own larger goals (e.g., teaching them to navigate through the Internet so they could access information). Many of these learners understood how the teacher was helping them achieve goals they had set for themselves. They spoke about the ways they felt themselves "growing" as people and feeling "stronger" as a result of their experience in the program.

Daniel, like Christopher, had his own criteria for assessing whether a teacher is good; he described good teachers as "knowledgeable," "patient," and "polite." Also, similar to Christopher, Daniel believed that a teacher's personality can make a difference in terms of supporting learning. For Daniel, it was also important that teachers have a wealth of information to share—he understood this as being important to helping achieve his self determined learning goals. In the second interview, he talked more about why these human qualities were important for him to see in teachers.

> I think it's **to be polite and to first of all**, with the student, to be **patient**, a lot of patience. I think that's first. **First of all have the patience, especially with old people, and have to think how to more or less if you become my way, or something like that, the way you have to listen to me**. I think that's a good way to teach people, because you have to know how. There is a lot of people they don't

> understand a lot of things, and very simple things. You have to go back and explain the other way around. **That's why I say patience is a lot, have a lot to do with . . . being a teacher, a good teacher**. Because I see, like I go back in what I told you before, I have people that used to do, that start work with me and I'm nice, nice person and everything, good attitude. In the beginning I say everything is okay, but I used to give them simple squares to cut, and you tell them you're going to take so many pieces, four inches this way, or like five pieces the long way. Say gee, but how are we going to get so many piece out of this? If I was nervous person or something like that I will get pissed off with that, say the hell with it. But that's why I say patience is a lot, and you understand how the people can pick up some things and stuff, and learn. And take advantage of it. . . . I've got to focus on their personality. Because a lot of people they can learn quick, some people they have a difficult to learn. (PI #2, pp. 17-18)

This passage illuminates what Daniel means by "politeness" and "patience," two qualities he valued in his own work as a supervisor ("I'm . . . nice person, good attitude"). Daniel, like all other learners with this way of knowing,[*] stressed that it is important for teachers "to listen to me." For Daniel, this need to be recognized seems embedded in a larger context than what other people think about him. In his view, listening to others requires skill—"you have to know how"—and a sensitivity to individual learning styles—"a lot of people they can learn quick, some people they have a difficult to learn." Daniel valued patience and the ability to understand in his teachers and in his own supervisory work.

Daniel also appreciated teachers who can get students to work hard. He referred to John and Margaret during the second interview when asked what makes a good teacher.

> John is very polite, is good teacher. He got a good experience how to make you feel comfortable. And make you understand also. He have a lot of different ways to show us how to understand a lot of stuff. He is ready for any question I have, and got a lot of patience. And I think he's a good teacher. [*How about Margaret?*] No, never seen her in my life either. [*Anything surprise you about her?*] No. Yes, in the beginning when you met anybody and how you be, see how we're going to do and how she is going to be teaching us. But she is pretty good. She is very nice. And she has stuff she wants to force us. (PI #2, p. 3)

Although we are not sure what Daniel meant by "she wants to force us," he may mean that Margaret asked students to work really hard, thereby challenging them in a positive way. Here, Daniel reflects on the teacher–learner relationship and his classmates' needs (demonstrating a Self-Authoring capacity). Daniel did not seem to resent Margaret for the amount of work he and the cohort had to complete. In his view, Margaret was "strict."

> Try to make you work hard. Yes. It give you support, and she give you support and she tries you to, to make you work hard and learn more . . . The way she tries to help us to express, everybody. I think she did good job.

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[*] Wanting to be recognized could be a demonstration of either a Socializing or Self-Authoring way of knowing, depending on how a learner makes sense of what it means to be recognized.

He appreciated how Margaret was able to teach students how to say things in English. He added,

> A lot of times we were so comfortable, if you, sometime if you say something she will show you that, and so you can say [it] this way, or something like that. She'll not, she got a way to show us so not to be, for us not to be offended. (p. 10)

When the interviewer asked Daniel how the teacher helps students not to feel offended, he replied, "I don't have no way to explain that." He did not yet have the capacity to fully take a perspective on why this happens. At the same time, he was able to understand the teacher's perspective *as separate* from his own and seemed able to imagine her teaching intentions. Daniel explains that he had to miss six weeks of class and make up the homework. Margaret gave him work to redo.

> I have to copy about all eight, eight of them. And she was a little strict also on one, in the end because some of those stories I have to write [illegible] to go too long. In the past I used to write a little longer. And bec[illegible]se, I'm very busy at work, where I work. I have people that works with me and I have to be doing those, to coach them. And I don't have enough time for tons of homework. **But she was doing her job and tried to make me, force me to do better, which I'm proud of that**. (PI #2, 10)

Daniel's understanding of this situation is larger than how Margaret thinks of him. He locates the responsibility for her feelings in her, and the feelings of pride in *himself*.

In the last interview, when asked to share his thinking about what makes a good teacher, Daniel responded by discussing the connection he sees between good teaching and good supervisory work. At this time, we noted an important change in Daniel's construction.

> A good teacher you have to know how to explain. You have to know how to deal with different people. I think the teacher is being like being a good supervisor, you have to have a lot of patience, because especially if you, say you deal with the kids now, you have a lot of kids, they use drugs, they go to school, you don't know what kind of attitude they go to school with. So, you can go in there and sometime one of them, they come in . . . things like that and they think you're gonna, like, you get mad and things like that. There's a lot of teaching that you have to know people. You dealing with a lot of people, lot of different people and each one got a different attitude. It's tough for a teacher, being a teacher because this point, you know. But if you get good students, they learn good, and you know how to express yourself also, to explain, that makes a good teacher. Like an English teacher, he knows everything in the head, most things you ask him for something, he, bang, he tell you. (PI #4, 11)

Daniel's explanation is not grounded in his experience at Polaroid but extends to teaching in general. At the end of the program, he was able to articulate a fuller and different appreciation for the complexity of a teacher's work and the demands of the teaching job. In this last interview, his thinking about the teacher–learner relationship demonstrates an important change. For the first time, he talked about good teaching dependng on getting "good students." In his view, "no matter how good teacher you have, if you don't really want to learn, you're not going to learn nothing." At this time, Daniel understood the motivation to learn as somewhat independent of the teacher's influence—an important change from his earlier conception of the teacher–learner relationship. He now assumed greater responsibility for his role in his learning process and seemed to have a deeper understanding of the complexities of his teachers' role in that process. This marked an important shift in his way of knowing.

Like Daniel and Christopher, Jeff also thought that good teachers employ different teaching techniques that help learners with different learning styles and needs. Like Christopher, he talked about the subtle qualities in a teacher's personality that make a difference. Although his ideas about what makes a good teacher remained fairly consistent during the program, we present his case to illustrate how he, with a fully and singly operating Self-Authoring way of knowing, understood this relationship. During the first interview, in response to the interviewer's question about the qualities of a good teacher, Jeff said,

> The person who's teaching has to, let's say, **make it interesting**. It has to be interesting to the student. You can just go in and say, "Well, today we're gonna do math, this is how you do it, you do it this way, you know, you add this number to this number," you know. [*So how does a teacher make it interesting?*] **Teaching but not teaching.** . . . Well, just like we're sitting here talking now, . . . just casual talk, stuff like that. You put a number up on the board and, you know, you got to make it interesting. **You got to keep the attention of the student.** [*Are there other things you think make a good teacher?*] **Well, personality and all that.** [*What's the right personality to be a good teacher?*] **There's a difference in sternness and looseness**. You can almost, some teachers you can almost, you're, that's it right there. . . . Just the way you look. . . . [They should be] stern, but casual, loose, you know. But yet keep control of the situation. (PI #1, p. 11-12)

Jeff initially answered this question about what makes a good teacher by stating learning is interesting when a teacher is "teaching but not teaching." He later revealed more about what he meant by this: Good teachers are "stern, but casual, loose, you know. But yet, keep control of the situation." Jeff demonstrates definite ideas about what makes a good teacher. When assessing whether a person is a good teacher, Jeff looked inside himself to decide and considered a variety of factors—including the context. He appreciated both a teacher's work and learners' needs.

In our last interview, Jeff mentioned that a good teacher can "explain things" to learners with different learning needs. He considered other factors when deciding whether or not someone is a good teacher, including personality characteristics, the context is which a teacher teaches, and a teacher's ability to meet the needs of learners with different learning styles, preferences, and strengths. Jeff observed the situation and considered the larger context in which teaching occurs. Also in this last interview, Jeff spoke about a good teacher as someone who "can, say, carry out directions and explain things . . . in an easy, simple format" so learners can understand. Jeff's assessment of teachers, their practices, and ability to work with students suggests a capacity to step back from the teacher–learner relationship to observe what they do. Jeff has his own way of determining what constitutes good teaching—and internally generated values he uses to make this assessment.

Jeff also has the developmental capacity to critique his teachers' practices and offer constructive feedback. He named several occasions when he did this because he thought his feedback might help teachers better support learning. For example, in the third interview, Jeff talked about critiquing Kirk, a teacher, who arrived late for class several times. Not only did Jeff share this directly with Kirk, he also told the interviewer that he made people at CEI aware of Kirk's tardiness because this kind of information could help CEI improve the adult diploma program. In this same interview, Jeff told us how he decided to tell John that sophisticated mathematical concepts were being taught in a way that was not working *for the class*. In Jeff's view, the class was getting lost because John was introducing concepts without fully discussing details that were needed to enhance understanding. These two examples demonstrate Jeff's capacity to act on his own beliefs and values for the good of the class, himself, and the CEI teaching enterprise as a whole. This shows the extent of his understanding of the complexity and interconnectedness of the larger system and all the participants within it.

In this section we have illustrated how learners who have different underlying meaning systems understand the teacher–learner relationship generally, and what it means to be a good teacher specifically. We have highlighted how their conceptions of these were not fixed but changed during the program. We observed two types of changes. First, learners' notions expanded and possibly became clearer as they gained experience in the program. Second, many learners' conceptions changed as they grew to demonstrate new ways of knowing and, therefore, understand their experience in new ways. For example, we examined how Bill and Renada found it most important that their teachers provide clear explanations and step-by-step procedures to *make* them learn. These Instrumental knowers assessed their learning by their ability to demonstrate *behaviors* and by the grades they received from teachers. When learning, they focused on their concrete needs and felt supported when teachers *gave* them information and made efforts to provide extra assistance when needed. Importantly, at the end of the program, we marked changes in how each of these learners conceived the teacher–learner relationship. Both Bill and Renada began to recognize an internal and abstract experience. In both cases, we note the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing.

Learners who made sense of their experience with the Instrumental/ Socializing way of knowing, like Bill and Renada, also felt supported in their learning when teachers explained concepts well and talked slowly so that they could understand. However, unlike Bill and Renada, these learners expected their teachers to be good role models, and they saw their teachers not only as sources of support, but also as their peers. These learners wanted their teachers to value their ideas and themselves—and they felt most supported by teachers who really "cared" about them. Like Bill, Teresina, for example, initially told us that good teachers *made* her do her homework. However, unlike Bill, Teresina felt that good teachers also helped her *feel comfortable*. At the program's end, Teresina's understanding of the teacher–learner relationship changed. She grew able to talk more abstractly about these relationships, mentioning that a person *should respect* teachers, just as a person *should* respect her parents.

We also illuminated how Socializing knowers make sense of the teacher–learner relationship, and how their conceptions changed during the program. For example, we presented excerpts from Rita's data and showed, that as a Socializing knower, she was not only interested in fulfilling her teachers' expectations of her, but also identified with these expectations. In other words, we examined how the teachers' goals for Rita's learning *were her own goals for learning*. Like Teresina, Rita viewed her teacher as the source of authority; most important for Rita, however, was teachers' interest in her as a person. This kind of genuine care and concern from teachers facilitated her learning. Rita, like other Socializing knowers, expected the teacher to *know* what she needed to learn. Although Rita could *feel* (internally) when she had learned something, she needed the teacher's acknowledgement to feel complete. In this way of knowing, good relationships with teachers facilitated the learning process. Interpersonal connections are important supports.

We also discussed how Self-Authoring knowers not only saw their teachers as authorities and sources of knowledge, but also viewed themselves and each other as generators of knowledge. These learners, unlike Socializing knowers, were able, to varying degrees, to reflect on their teachers' instruction and offer constructive feedback. Like Socializing knowers, they voiced appreciation for teachers who employed a variety of teaching techniques and strategies to meet learners' needs. However, unlike learners with other underlying meaning systems, they were concerned with meeting their *own* goals and internally generated standards to advance their larger learning purposes. Good teachers supported them in meeting their own goals. These learners did not look to meet teachers' expectations for their learning but looked to themselves and their own expectations. Additionally, they took greater responsibility for their learning both inside and outside of the classroom. For example, Christopher, like other learners, talked about "growing" and "feeling strong" as he learned in the program. Christopher, like Daniel and Jeff, had internally generated criteria for assessing good teachers. Daniel, for instance, grew to understand his teachers' perspective as *separate* from his own during in the program. He developed a capacity to appreciate the complexity of a teacher's work and understood the motivation to learn, to a certain extent, as independent of the teacher's influence.

By carefully documenting both the *content* and the *shape* of learners' thinking about their relationships with their teachers and their expectations of their teachers, we have not only illuminated commonalities and differences in how these learners experienced these relationships, but also shown how their conceptions and understandings changed over time. We will now turn to the many ways in which the program helped learners change the way they enacted their roles as workers and, often, as parents.

SECTION IV: "THE PROGRAM DONE A LOT OF GOOD SO FAR—IT'S PUSHING MY THINKING PROCESS:"[*] LEARNERS' CONCEPTIONS OF HOW PROGRAM LEARNING MADE A DIFFERENCE IN AND TRANSFERRED TO THEIR WORK LIVES

> I don't want my kids to quit school [that's] one of the key things. I quit in '68. I got a son who quit school in the 11th grade. [It] broke my heart. And I got four more coming up and I told them, "I'm going back to school." I got one son in the eighth grade. He wants to go to vocational school . . . he wants to work. He's got Cs and a couple of Ds. [And I said to him,], "This is great that you never failed." . . . But I'm hoping, when they see the graduation party I throw for myself, I'll tell them, "I'll do better . . . one for them, so hopefully that'll tell them, graduate." I'll help them buy a car, help them buy a dirt bike, anything I can do to keep them in school. . . . I'll keep you warm at night, I just want you to make [it through] school. I am 30 years later. It's tough. The program done a lot of good so far—it's pushing my thinking process. Everything was a joke [to me] before, now I do a lot of things. (***Bill***, Focus Group, 2/23/99)

> At Polaroid, they don't give people jobs because you've been around 10, 20, or 50 years; they give you promotion [if you have a high school diploma], because the company wants to move ahead. . . . It's really good omen and appreciation for Polaroid to come up with that idea and choosing people willing to work to be and to learn. See, I think what's important [for work is] knowing how to speak [and] . . . [learning] technical [skills] to do that job with your best. . . . When we went to get jobs [in the 1970s], the big thing was did you graduate high school? It wasn't what [college] degrees do you have or stuff like that? . . . But now, today, it's almost what degrees do you have? Well naturally if you got a degree, you got a high school diploma. (***Pierre***, Focus Group, 2/23/99)

> I like the course because finally, after 20-some years, I can go back on my resume and change the block [on applications] where it says "Do you have a high school diploma?" I had to put, no. But now, once this is completed, I can go back and say I want to change that to, yes, I do. A lot of people have asked me, it's like, "What are you taking, what kind of course are taking?" And I just tell them, "I'm taking a learning course." "Well what kind of course?" "It's a learning course to help me increase my knowledge and things like that." "Well is it this, is it that?" And finally one day I said, "It's just your average high school diploma course." "Oh really?" They were, like, they were shocked that I wasn't done, that I'm doing it. Basically there [at Polaroid], everybody there thinks everybody has graduated high school or has some kind of degree or something like that, which when you start talking there's a lot of people who don't have that paper. And some are scared to admit it. And even like us coming to the class here, some of them [other Polaroid employees not enrolled in the CEI Adult Diploma Program] still look at us [those in the program] like, it's funny to them. But it's not funny to us because we're trying

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[*] We acknowledge Bill, who said this when we asked him in June 1999 how and if the program had helped him at work and in his life.

> to get ahead but they think that at our, I don't know everybody's age, but at my age why do you want to get involved to do that? (***Jeff***, Focus Group, 2/23/99)

During the 14 months of our study, we had the privilege of listening closely to these learners as they told us about their role as workers and how learning in this program was helping them do their work better. One of our research questions focused on our deep interest in understanding how learners' experiences in the program might help them feel more competent and confident in their work. Before turning to this question, we will discuss some of the complexities of work in today's society.

Research on the Multiple Demands of Work in the 21st Century

> Historically, particularly in Britain and Europe, adult education has been seen as a political movement—a movement toward freedom and liberation that is both personal and social. (Cranton, 1994, xi)

Researchers (Ciulla, 2000; Evers, Rush, Berdrow, & Berdrow 1998; Gowen, 1992) commonly cite three major changes that have led to current workplace conditions and three dominant themes that have contributed to such changes: "The shift to . . . technology requir[ing] highly skilled workers;" "significant shifts in the ethnic and gender distribution as well as the size of the future workforce;" and "the familiar contention that the nation is in the throes of a major decline in basic skills" (Ciulla, 2000, p. 8). Joanne Ciulla (2000) discusses the importance of work in our "work-oriented society" and notes the paradoxical nature of our culture—we live in a culture that "both celebrates work and continually strives to eliminate it" (p. xi). Work on today's shop floors has changed dramatically since Frederick Winslow Taylor (1911). While Taylor admired the skills of workers and craftsmen in his day, his goal was to design work so that "almost any person could do any job with maximum efficiency" (Ciulla, 2000, p. 93). Today, work requires more.

Recent national attention has been devoted to the complex nature of the 21st century workplace and the need to better support workers as they enhance their skills and competencies to meet the demands of the changing nature of work. In a study sponsored by the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC, a nonpartisan research group), John Comings, Andrew Sum, and Johan Uvin (2000), with W. Neal Fogg, Sheila Palma, Maricel Santos, Lisa Soricone, and Mykhaylo Trub'skyy report that in Massachusetts, for example, one-third of the state's 3.2 million workers age 25 to 64 lack the "basic technical skills" required to meet the demands of the modern workplace (Vaishnav & Greenberger, 2001, p. 1). Of these, 58 percent have a high school diploma, and, 17 percent have limited English skills. Sadly, they also report that 1.1 million workers' jobs are at risk as companies across the nation require skills that they do not have—skills they need to be effective workers, given today's work culture and economic conditions. CEOs across the nation, and particularly in Massachusetts, are seeking employees who can "adapt to the rapid pace of modernization" (Vaishnav & Greenberger, 2001, p. 22). Comings et al. (2000) explain,

> The main literacy problem of U.S. workers is not that of illiteracy in the traditional sense. Instead, it is a problem of limited skills that restrict workers' ability to perform higher-skilled jobs and take on more complicated duties that are required of workers in the New Economy. (p. 18)

Literacy in the 21st century workplace includes familiarity with technology and critical thinking skills, and these researchers contend that the health of our society depends on supporting workers—through education—to meet new workplace demands. This 21st century definition of literacy contrasts sharply with the early 1900s definition; then, individuals were considered literate if they could write their names (Comings et al., 2000). Comings et al. (2000) assert that workers without multiple skill sets in today's information age will, if not sufficiently trained, lose their places in companies as new technological positions replace manual jobs. With the advance of automation and computerization, work in the 21st century requires more problem-solving skills and a new set of basic skills.

For example, Richard Murnane and Frank Levy (1996) conducted research to examine the minimum skills workers need to attain a middle-class job and found that the "new basic skills" include the abilities to

- read at the ninth-grade level or higher.
- use math at the ninth-grade level or higher.
- solve semistructured problems for which hypotheses must be formed and tested.
- work in groups with coworkers from different backgrounds.
- communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- use personal computers to carry out simple tasks, such as word processing. (cited in Comings et al., 2000, p. 2)

Similarly, Comings et al. (2000) maintain that the 21st century workplace requires more sophisticated oral and written language skills. They cite Victoria Purcell-Gates' (1995) research documenting changes in oral-language skills (growing in a positive direction) as literacy levels change. They report "oral discourse in the workplace is becoming more like the oral discourse in school, which is modeled on writing" (Comings et al., 2000, p. 3).

To improve the economic well-being of our nation and support workers as they strive to meet the complex demands and conditions of the modern workplace, we must attend to workers' learning needs. Research suggests "substantial productivity payoff to workplace literacy programs. They also help workers by teaching them the basic skills that often translate into opportunities to advance in their jobs" (Comings et al., 2000, p. 49). To help people be vital contributors at work and keep up with the rapid pace of change, there is an urgent need to focus on providing learning opportunities for our nation's workers. What specific kinds of changes do workers notice in themselves when they participate in educational programs? How do the skills workers learn in these programs translate to their work lives?

In today's workplace, skill and competence have multiple meanings. Evers, Rush, and Berdrow (1998) point to the lack of clarity in defining what skills and competencies mean. They cite Paul Attewell's (1990) article "What is Skill?" in which he defines skill as "the ability to do something, but the word connotes a dimension of increasing ability. Thus, while skill is synonymous with competence, it evokes images of expertise, mastery, and excellence" (p.433, cited in Evers, Rush, & Berdrow, 1998, p. 24). Arguing that skills are "not possessed in isolation," they suggest that "base competencies represent functionally related skill sets. All skills can be viewed on continua from low to high levels of competency" (p. 25). While we agree that skills "can be viewed on continua from low to high levels of competency," as Evers, Rush, and Berdrow (1998) suggest, we also contend that it is important to consider how workers with different ways of knowing demonstrate various skills and competencies so that we might better support and challenge working people as they strive to meet the increasingly complex demands of the 21st century workplace.[ii]

[ii] In Chapter Eight, we present our developmental conception of competency and an analysis of themes related to competency across learners in our three sites to illustrate the intersection between skill/competency performance and way of knowing.

Like our colleagues at Equipped for the Future (EFF), we suggest it is important to attend to dimensions of workers' performance when constructing a developmental performance continuum. Stein (2000) names these dimensions as: "1) Structure of knowledge base, 2) Fluency of performance, 3) Independence of performance, and 4) Range of conditions for performance" (p. 59). How do workers with different ways of knowing make sense of their work? How might the skills and competencies they develop in this program transfer to their work life? How might learners with different ways of knowing demonstrate mastery of a particular skill? How, if at all, might learning within these programs help participants transform their ways of knowing? How might this kind of *transformational* learning help participants better manage their work?

In the next section, we focus on how learners who make sense of their experience with different ways of knowing experienced program learning as making a difference in their ability to do their jobs. We will examine how learning in the program helped learners *change* their relationship to their work. We will discuss how learners talked about transferring "skills" and competencies gained in the CEI Adult Diploma Program classes to their roles as workers and, in some cases, parents. In sharing learners' perspectives, we will focus on two types of change. The first type is the changes learners noticed in themselves and attributed to their program participation. These stories highlight how *these learners felt they had changed not only in terms of demonstrable skills and competencies, but also in terms of the way they saw themselves as changed.* The second type is *transformational change*. These stories illustrate how many of the learners grew to make sense of their work life with new and more complex ways of knowing.

First, we will highlight the themes linking learners who shared a particular way of knowing. These themes reflect commonalities in understanding their role as workers, their relationship to authority (i.e., supervisors), and the changes they noticed in themselves and in their abilities to fulfill their role as workers. All learners, regardless of their way of knowing, reported that the skills they learned in program classes helped them better perform as workers, and the great majority of learners also talked about other kinds of changes they noticed in themselves. As we discuss these themes, we present examples from learners' interviews to illustrate how they made sense of these themes.

For each way of knowing, we will present an example to illustrate in depth how the themes played out in the context of one learner's work environment, and sometimes within a participant's life outside the workplace. We aim to bring attention to the *changes* in how each learner grew able to enact her role. The selected cases represent the major themes and changes that learners who shared a particular way of knowing experienced during our study.

A Developmental View of Learners' Understandings of the Role of Worker, Relationships with Supervisors, and Transfer of Learning—Stories of Change

The Instrumental Way of Knowing

As stated previously, when Bill and Renada began the program, each demonstrated a fully operating Instrumental way of knowing (i.e., 2). Upon program completion, each grew to demonstrate hints of a Socializing way of knowing operating (i.e., 2(3)). Here, we examine how learners understood their roles as workers and how they thought the program helped them develop "skills" for becoming better workers. We will highlight the changes participants noticed in themselves as workers and attributed to participation in the program. Throughout this discussion, we will focus on how participants' thinking about their roles as workers changed during the program.

These Instrumental knowers talked about work and their role as workers in concrete terms. In general, they describe their role in terms of their behaviors at work and the requirements that work made upon them. Although both Bill and Renada were able to share details of their job histories, neither discussed work in more abstract terms. Nor did they discuss any conceptual links between their previous jobs and the work they were doing at Polaroid. Also, both told us how their learning in the program was helping them do their work "faster" and more efficiently. While all learners talked about improved efficiency, learners with other underlying meaning systems also reflected on more abstract ways in which learning in the program was helping them to perform as workers.

Role Construction

In her first interview, Renada told us about her job history at Polaroid. In so doing, she listed the different jobs she had held: assembling cameras, then repairing them, and then administering tests and processing film in the lab. Renada did not talk more abstractly about her work or how these jobs related to each other. Nor did she articulate any kind of conceptual links between her different jobs.

Both Renada and Bill considered work to be easier or harder based on the amount of effort they invested in doing their jobs. Their behaviors were linked to concrete consequences. Both thought about the tasks they did at work as having direct consequences in terms of rewards and punishments. For example, these learners were motivated to enroll in the program because, as Renada said, "I want to have my diploma to get a better job." For Renada, there was a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the things she did at work and the rewards and/or punishments she received. Neither Bill nor Renada talked about feelings of loyalty or deep connections to their company. They viewed Polaroid as their employer who paid them for the work they did. As Bill said, Polaroid "puts food on my table," so he continued to work for them.

When Renada, a non-native speaker of English originally from West Africa, talked about the way her job had changed over the years, she described two types of major (concrete) changes. First, people were being asked to do more work with "computers," which is "harder" to learn, and second, the recent layoff meant fewer workers were doing the work that more would have done in the past. Renada understood these changes in her workplace in terms of how her behaviors changed over time and how the job itself changed. During the first interview, she shared that in the past, "They show me, then I pick up . . . They show me how, I started doing alone. The more I do, the more I learn. To fix the cameras." In the last interview, she spoke about a change in how she needed to do her work.

> **Before is not like now**. Before, if you go to work, they show you how to do, put a [camera] together, but now, they change completely. Now you have to do more work in a computer. If you don't know how to write and read, it is more confuse.

Both Renada and Bill told us they learned how to do something at work by watching someone do it and then doing it themselves.

Second, Renada discussed the changes she noticed in her workplace after employees were laid off. In the second interview, she explained that this program would have been easier in the past because she would have been able to get schoolwork done during work.

> Work. Now, it's very busy because they give a lot of people layoff, so a few people have a lot of things to do. I don't even have time to study there. Sometimes before I have a lot of time, but we don't go to school. Now I need more time, but we don't even have the time. . . . Before you can take break and then you have time maybe to study a little bit. Now it's a lot of work. **Sometimes we work through the lunch and don't even take lunch. Busy. Everybody want, priority, priority, fast, fast. They want to see results**. (PI #2, p. 3)

Both Renada and Bill mentioned repeatedly that there was not enough "time" to do all that was needed to balance their roles as workers, learners, and parents. However, the context in which they mentioned these concerns differed. Bill talked about not having enough time "at home" to do all of his homework, while Renada focused on how her work environment had changed and, because of that, she no longer has "time at work" to do her homework.

Changes in Skills & Competencies

Importantly, Renada and Bill talked about how their skills had changed as a result of their participation in the program. Each said the skills they learned in diploma program classes were helping them change the way they did their work. Both said they had become better able to communicate their ideas because of the CEI Adult Diploma Program. Bill became "more aware" of his writing, and Renada talked about being better able to communicate her ideas orally. Each reported feeling better able to help their children with homework because of the math and English skills they had learned in the program. Their new math skills, each said, changed the way they were able to do their work (each reported they needed to do mathematical computations on the job). More skills helped them to be better workers.

Renada also noticed changes in her ability to communicate her ideas to others. She said people at work have told her that she "can explain herself better." Many of the learners, regardless of their way of knowing, reported improved expressive English skills during the program, and this was helpful to them in their workplace.

Changes in Relationships with Co-workers and Supervisors

Not only did Bill and Renada notice changes in themselves (i.e., mostly skill changes), but, at the end of the program, we also noticed changes in how they talked about their relationships with coworkers and supervisors. In both cases, hints of a Socializing way of knowing emerged and it was demonstrated in several ways. Bill began to demonstrate hints of orienting toward his internal or psychological experience when he discussed his relationships with his coworkers and classmates. Bill also began to look to his teacher, Judith, as a valued authority. As mentioned earlier we noticed that Renada was beginning to be able to demonstrate some capacity for abstract thinking.

Bill and Renada named John, the math and science teacher, as a source of support to them. Learning in his class, they said, helped them to increase and improve skills that they then transferred to the workplace. Additionally, Bill said John provided emotional support and encouraged him to stay in the program when he was feeling discouraged and ready to leave. Renada mentioned other teachers in the program as being supportive to her skill development as well. As was discussed in Chapter Six, Bill experienced his cohort colleagues as supportive to his learning. He also mentioned his family as a source of support. Additionally, Bill named his coworkers as supports and alluded to the support of his supervisors, plant managers, and general manager because they offered him congratulatory wishes and a party when he completed the program. In the following section, we present Bill's case to illuminate how he constructed the themes we have discussed here and also to highlight how his thinking about his role as worker changed during the program.

Bill's Case: "Doing" a Job as a Worker

In the first interview, we learned about Bill's construction of work when he spoke about his employment history. He shared that, in the past, he was fired from many jobs "for being an idiot." Now, at Polaroid, he is in a position in which his responsibilities include supervising "some people." He told us that he "has a boss" and "does his job." As an Instrumental knower, Bill did not reflect on his role of worker in a more abstract way. In the future, he wants to be the "boss" himself, but he could not say why he wants to do this. He also shared that he might want to work in "waste processing" because he believed there was "good money" in that field. In a later interview with Bill, he expanded on why he might want to work in this field: "It'll clean up the world and leave it better."

During the third interview (February 1999), Bill talked about his relationship with his employer: "They pay me. I go to work. They put food on my table. They took care of my family for 20 years. So I feel I owe them something; that's why I go to work every day." Bill's construction of loyalty to Polaroid seems based on his expressed thinking that Polaroid pays him and thus takes care of him; therefore, he will continue to do his work. He has concrete, practical ideas about why a person works, or more specifically, why he works. Bill does not yet have the capacity to articulate more abstract reasoning about why work is important to him. He did not talk about any contributions that he felt he was making to the company by working in his position.

In the first interview, Bill talked about his relationships with both his boss and those who work under him. He told us that, as a supervisor, he knows those under him "take advantage of my good nature" by slacking off on the job. His boss, he shared, "always wants to fire" him but does not because "he likes it with me, 'cause I get the job done." Bill understands his relationship with his supervisor in a concrete way, his behavior, "getting the job done," causes his boss to "like" him and not fire him.

Bill also shared how he sees himself as a worker: "I've got leadership abilities anyway," he said, and contended it was his "job title," rather than internal qualities that "makes me lead, direct, assign." Bill does not discuss or orient toward the internal qualities that make him a "leader," but rather, describes the behaviors he demonstrates—"lead, direct, assign." Bill also told us he thought of himself as being "fairly educated in general knowledge" because he keeps up with current events (by reading the newspaper) and knows lots of trivia. Knowledge, for Bill, is constructed as a possession, an accumulation of facts (demonstrating Instrumental construction). Bill regretted his decision not to finish high school and thought he had fewer opportunities at work because he did not have a high school diploma. He provided an example from a past experience at work where not having this credential kept him from being considered for a promotion.

> And there was an opening . . . so we had a department meeting. "Anybody that wants to fill in that vacancy, come see me and we'll talk about it." So I raise my hand. And he [the supervisor] says to me, "You know, I would have gave it to you if you would have finished that program." . . . He says, "If you had your diploma, I might have said, well, look, the guy just got his diploma, you know."

Bill, like other learners with different underlying meaning systems, talked about being passed up for promotions at work because he lacked a high school diploma. In some of these cases, the learners were asked to train the person who was offered the higher-paying position. All of these learners told us they believed that having "the piece of paper" would have made the difference in being considered for the promotion. At the same time, learners with different ways of knowing made sense of this experience differently. Bill described the experience of being passed up for the promotion and what it meant to him in terms of its concrete consequences. His construction of this work experience was centered on actual rewards and punishments.

When we asked Bill, at different points during our data collection, if and how program learning was helping him at work, he mostly focused on the concrete but important ways he was able to transfer learning from one context to another. He talked about how having learned "skills" in math class helped him to do his job. In the second interview, Bill said that he was able to do math on his own and that he no longer needed to use the calculator as often.

> I'll have a, you know, like an invoice coming in, and I'll just turn it over and it's, you know, 200 pieces, and I got 40 boxes with 35 pieces in each, you know, I just "Yup. Yup. Ok, that's right." Click. Before I'd run over to the calculator and added it up. Now I'm not.

Doing the math "in his head" helped him do his work more "efficiently" and "faster" (because he did not have to go use the calculator). Bill told us this new skill saved time. He understood the situation in terms of a cause and effect relationship (e.g., If I work more efficiently and do better in my job, the consequence will be a reward: an increase in my salary). In September 1998, when we asked Bill to tell us about any ways in which being in the program had made things harder for him at work, he replied,

> Harder? No. Not at all. Nothing. I had no problems at work. What I do for them is Tuesdays and Thursdays, I don't go to lunch. So, when I leave early, I feel like I'm contributing my time. So, you know, I don't take advantage of the time out.

Bill did not, at this time, see any ways in which being in the program made things harder for him at work. He understood this situation at work as a fairness issue; he repays Polaroid for the time he needs to participate in the program by not taking lunch.

Bill also reported new skills that he learned in the program helped him with writing at work, changing the way he was able to communicate with others. For example, he said that "now" (during the second trimester) he thought about putting commas in sentences, whereas he would not have done that before. Bill said this in the context of sharing how learning in the program helped him be more "aware of what [he's] writing." About the ways in which being in this program might have made things better for him at work, Bill explained,

> At work? No. Except that I'm more aware of what I'm writing. You know, as I said, I always use a calculator at work, anyway. But now, I'm doing simple projects just, you know, I'll be scratching on the side of the wall and before, you know, before, I would run to calculator. You know, now I'm not. So, it's helped me work by cutting down on my time at the calculator, I guess. I don't know. (PI #2, p. 51)

But in the last interview, Bill discussed the way in which this new skill, doing math in his head, was making a *different kind of change* in the way he did his work.

> So I think it made **me a little better employee**, less time running around, hanging around the office there. I stay out at my machines more, I do my inventories. I don't depend on the calculator no more. (PI #4, p. 10)

Significantly, Bill pointed to a change in his own orientation to his coworkers (this marked the emergence of a Socializing way of knowing (i.e., 2(3)). He spoke more often about his relationship to his colleagues (one of a very few times he talked about other workers). He talked about how people who worked for him gave up their breaks and filled in for him because he was in class and said that he wanted to write them thank-you notes. In Bill's words, "Guys who lost their breaks because I wasn't there, guys who went too late, lost their coffee and stuff because I wasn't there, so I'm gonna send them all thank-you letters." These and other examples illustrate a subtle but important shift in Bill's way of understanding his role as a worker; he is beginning to orient to his inner psychological experience (though the context is concrete). Not only did Bill demonstrate this growing orientation toward abstract psychological experience with fellow workers, he also demonstrated it with family members. For example, Bill told us he now thanks his children for waiting for him when he picks them up after dropping his wife off at work.

The Instrumental/Socializing Way of Knowing

Seven of the 17 participants demonstrated both an Instrumental and a Socializing way of knowing fully operating (2/3 or 3/2). At program completion, Sal and Hope demonstrated an evolution in their way of knowing, from 2/3 to 3/2, and Rita's thinking evolved to a fully and solely operating Socializing way of knowing (i.e., from 3/2 to 3) toward the end of the program.

Like Bill and Renada, many of these learners had a concrete orientation to their work goals. For example, they told us they wanted a diploma or a better position at Polaroid to "make more money." However, when asked if there were other reasons why an education was important, they talked more about what earning a diploma or being promoted at work meant in abstract terms. Many oriented to their inner experience and talked about the influence of work on their emotional states. Learners understood their role as worker and their work in a way that reflected their meaning system.

Role Construction

For example, in the final interview, Veronica, who was laid off from Polaroid during the second trimester, expressed her appreciation that the company had supported her participation in the program. Originally from a country in West Africa, Veronica said that she was "proud" she was able to complete the program, especially given the multiple demands of her life that year. She looked forward to securing another job and to continuing her education by taking computer classes to enhance her skills.

> It's a big thing for me to have it. **I am so proud, even at home, my sister say, "We will all go with you, and then we will have a cookout, a party for you."** I am so happy, because I didn't think I was going to make it. I had all these problems with my house and all this tragedy, and everything, in the house, husband and kids, and work and family, it's hard. . . . I am so proud and happy I made it. **I would like to go into some computer classes. I wait until I get another job, because** I'm not working, so now I have time. I can't explain. I am happy inside of myself because I never knew I will get this far to get. **If I not working at Polaroid, I don't think I'll get my high school diploma**. So Polaroid . . . it's a good company. And I don't think I'll get another job like Polaroid.

Veronica tells us, "I am happy inside of myself," demonstrating an orientation to her internal experience and the influence of earning a diploma on her emotions. This points to a sense of self larger than a collection of concrete attributes and one that experiences an emotion internally. At the same time, her reasoning is concrete.

While Veronica, who was laid off from her job, felt appreciation for Polaroid, Helena felt that the company did not "care" about their employees. At the start of the program, Helena was worried about being able to find another job if she were to be laid off from Polaroid. But at the end of the program, Helena's thinking demonstrates a changed understanding of her work situation. She voiced new confidence in being able to find a new job if necessary. When asked why she no longer worried, Helena told us how she now understood her work situation.

> I think if I lose my job, I find another one. I think, God help me. . . . Because, like if you worry, you can't think, you can' help it. So why you worry, I calm down. So this is the way I feel. It come. I say, why I worry, maybe never come to be. So I don't worry anymore. Because if it happen, gonna happen anyways. So if he didn't want to give me package [a severance], if I worry or I don't worry, they give me anyways. So then . . . nothing I can do about it the thing, why I worry. They don't care about me anyway, they want to give to me, they don't care about me. If they want to give you package to leave, they do it, they don't care you cry, you kill yourself, they don't care. So why I worry?

Helena was able to talk about her internal experience of worrying or not worrying about whether she would be laid off and about knowing that God would help her; she thinks more abstractly about her experience (demonstrations of a Socializing way of knowing). In the above passage, she shares her internal conversation about the pros and cons of her work situation, thus taking a perspective on her worrying. The possibility of being laid off from Polaroid has an emotional component to it for her—it is about more than losing a job or not. While Helena talked about Polaroid not caring about people, which demonstrates a Socializing way of knowing, her explanation is discussed in concrete terms, which demonstrates an Instrumental way of knowing.

Developing Skills and Competencies, Increasing Self Confidence, and Changes in Relationship with Supervisors & Coworkers

All learners making meaning in this way told us they enrolled in the program because they thought their expressive English skills would improve, and this would help them express themselves with supervisors and coworkers. Many said that with improved expressive English skills, they could be "better team members;" this was important to them and to their work, they said. Almost all spoke about the need to improve their expressive English skills because of the changes in the workplace (i.e., they were aware how the recent layoffs were influencing their working lives). They believed improved skills would help them keep their jobs and create possibilties for promotion.

At the end of the program, all of these learners reported feeling better able to communicate with supervisors and coworkers, and they attributed these changes to skills they had learned in the program. Several said that they were "proud" of themselves, and that they felt better about not having to ask coworkers and supervisors for help as much anymore. They reported that learning in the program helped them better read the logs left by the previous shift and write notes to convey information to the next shift of workers. Improved expressive English skills, they said, helped them to no longer feel "scared" to ask questions, which in turn, seemed to empower them in their workplace and in the classroom. For example, Angelina was interested in improving her skills and felt this was especially important at Polaroid because, in their AKP, employees are rewarded by their supervisors for improving their skills. Demonstrating new and improved skills to her supervisor would lead to "getting credit." Angelina, like other learners across ways of knowing, voiced her need for this kind of credit in connection with her awareness of the changing nature of her workplace.

Learners making sense of their experience in this way talked about how they "pushed" themselves at work; they discussed how they looked to important others (supervisors and sometimes coworkers) to evaluate their work and tell them whether they were doing a good job. People's opinions of them and their performance mattered greatly. Earning approval from a supervisor was especially important; they looked to their supervisor for approval and to know they were doing a good job at work (i.e., an external rather than internal evaluation of their work). Many of these learners told us how much they valued their supervisor's support and approval and spoke about it repeatedly through the program. Angelina and Helena also talked often about how their supervisors encouraged them. This kind of encouragement became increasingly important to learners as they began to more fully demonstrate a Socializing way of knowing. As discussed earlier, people making meaning with a Socializing way of knowing take on other people's opinions and turn to others to know when they have done a good job and what should give them pride.

All learners said their "skills" had increased as a result of their learning, and this helped them at work. They most often referred to improved communication skills. Initially, many said that they were "afraid" to ask questions (at work and in the classroom); however, all reported this changed for them, stating that they were "afraid before" but "now" were no longer "afraid." Importantly, many said that *other people* at work told them they were better communicators.

For example, Teresina, a non-native speaker of English originally from West Africa, talked about how learning in the program had helped her communicate better at work; she noted a change in her own behavior. In the second interview, Teresina was feeling more confident about her ability to express herself in English, and she described how this new skill was helping her at work and in her relationships with coworkers and friends. Not only did she feel better able to express herself orally, she also felt better able to write reports ("do the paperwork"). In response to the question about ways the program has improved her work, Teresina discussed the difference between her work life before the program and how she experienced it at that point (September 1998).

> Before, I have a problem to talk in meetings. My job, they have meeting groups. You have to say something about the job. I have a problem. Very difficult. I have some ideas, but I don't know how. Now, I have a little problem, because I talk better English. I think this class I have this semester help me a lot. And to talk to

> my friends. I have a lot of friends who speak English. Now, I talk to them better. If I have some problem now for making the papers at the end of the night, you have to make your paperwork, now I make better [papers] than before . . . about how the machine works, what problems you have. You have to put on the paper. That's called the paperwork.

In the last interview, Teresina told us that these improved skills helped her feel "more confident" about talking with other people at work. She also felt more confident using the skills she learned as a result of her participation in the program (most of these are "concrete" skills).

Another way Teresina said that her work life changed was that before participating in the program, Teresina did not ask questions during team meetings; she felt her "boss" would not listen to her because she did not speak English well. However, when she spoke about her relationship with her supervisor and how her improved communication skills were helping at work, she noted a change in herself as a worker.

> Sometimes the boss talk about something, they can't [understand] you. But now, I know how to explain to him. . . . But before, if the boss see you don't talk very good English, he just . . . stop. . . . No. He won't give [me a bad evaluation], but he don't listen to me. Because I don't speak good English.... **Before I don't talk**. If . . . he [the boss] ask me something [I would say], "No. I don't have nothing to say," because I scared. I [*You were scared.*] But, no. **Now . . . if he ask me, someday I gonna tell [him] this, this, and this. . . . Sometimes [before] I have something to say about the job, but I keep my mouth shut because I think they gonna laugh at me if I say. But now I don't have this problem. After I came for this course, I understand better English.**

Teresina felt better about speaking in work meetings and sharing her opinion. She talked about having been "afraid" of people laughing at her at work (i.e., she was "afraid" of what other people would think of her) before learning to express herself better in English.

Teresina told us that her relationship with her supervisor changed because she was better able to express herself in English and understand what others were saying at work. Her newly developed expressive English skills seemed to enable her to feel more empowered in her relationship with her supervisor and to present her views in work meetings. At the end of the program, she spoke about how she understood this change.

> **Now he** [her supervisor] **talks so lovely**, talks play. I say, now, he know I know better English, now. If he's tell me something, I [understand] to answer. [*Are you kind of angry at him, now?*] No. Doesn't bother me. No. No. Doesn't bother me, now. Because if he told me something, I gonna say the answer. I don't keep my mouth shut no more. I gonna say something. If I gonna joke, too, I know how to joke, too, just like him!

Many learners making sense with this way of knowing also spoke about how the program helped them in their relationships with coworkers. For some, this meant being able to explain their ideas more clearly to coworkers and also being able to do more at work—on their own. For example, Angelina, during the second through fourth interviews, talked about feeling increasingly confident when talking with other coworkers and her supervisor because she felt her expressive English skills had improved. Learning in the program helped her with "writing notes" after completing her shift. These notes help employees communicate what has happened during their shift to employees on the next shift. In the final interview, Angelina talked about how these new skills helped her in relationships with coworkers and how these relationships had changed.

> Sometime [when I'm at work], I get stuck. I don't know what I'm doing. I don't want to ask her [a coworker], because they already tell me [how to do the procedure]. So, I feel kind of—I don't know exactly. . . . Because [I] don't want to ask her, because they already tell me so many times. But, I don't want to go forward, because I don't want to make a mistake. So it's kind of, [I get], sometimes, well, **I get upset.** . . . But, then I came back again to do [my work] everyday. Then I say to myself, "I'm going to do this now." Everyday until I learn myself. Then, now, I'm doing it everyday.

Like many learners, Angelina talked about how she learned to do more on her own at work and also how she was better able to understand coworkers when they "explained" procedures to her. She spoke about not wanting to have to ask coworkers for help after they had told her so many times, suggesting that she felt some embarrassment or fear they would be angry. Angelina voiced an implicit concern for what her coworkers thought of her and their reactions. At the same time, she is unable to articulate a fuller internal experience of what this was like for her. Angelina's case allows us to better understand how a person making meaning in a Socializing way of knowing is identified with the opinions others hold of her. Angelina's coworkers' responses to her have a tremendous impact on the way she sees herself as a worker.

Some participants spoke about how program learning helped them in other social roles. For example, Teresina spoke about how learning in the program changed how she was able to enact her role as a parent. In the last interview, she reported she was better able to help her son with his homework, and that she attributed this change to skills learned in the program. When asked if there were other reasons why earning this diploma is important, Teresina remarked,

> [The diploma is] very important to [me]. My kid in the school, he ask me for [help with] something, "Mama, show me how to read this, how to write." Now, I have to teach him to do, to write. [*Eighteen months ago, you couldn't help him so much?*] No. Because I don't [know] how to write something. I don't [have] every words, but the important words I have, I know how to write. Yeah. And he's, some, when he bring me something from preschool, I know I understand better.

Teresina spoke about how helping her child is important to her while discussing how she was better able to help him in concrete terms. After participating in the program, she reported feeling she "now" had the needed skills to help him with his writing and to understand the communications he brought home from school.

Some of these learners named their supervisors as a support as they participated in the program. Many also mentioned ways in which their family supported them as they began to learn new skills they thought would be helpful in being a better worker. Most of these learners talked about their struggles balancing the multiple demands of being a worker, a learner, and, often, a parent—and how they felt supported by their immediate and sometimes extended family.

Hope's Case: Demonstrating New Competencies at Work

> I just let my mind travel, move more fast and think much better because my building at work is going through a lot of changes. I have to learn two more jobs, and I'm not getting the training like we used to. We trained a long time ago, we used to go to the classroom. Now, it's on-the-job training, and this is new to me, so I have to open up my mind to because each night I go, I don't know where I'll be, or if I'll go to my regular job that I used to do, or do I have to go to the other two job. So I have to think different paperwork [in each job], so it's really did something good for me. (***Hope***, Focus Group, 2/23/99)

While many learners told us how the skills they were learning in the program helped them at work, Hope spoke specifically about how these skills helped her better manage the demands of her increasingly complex work on the shop floor. Hope's case illuminates how she understood her new work responsibilities and how she felt better able to manage the multiple requirements in her three different types of jobs.

In the first interview, Hope, who immigrated from her home country in the Caribbean 30 years ago, spoke with great confidence as she described her competency as a worker. At that time, she said she wished her "teachers" in the program could visit her "on the job" so that they would see how complex it was and how well she performed her tasks. However, in January 1999, after working for Polaroid for more than a decade, Hope was "told" that rather than doing the one job she had always done, she would need to do two additional jobs. The changing nature of the workplace demanded greater competencies from Hope. In the third interview, after managing her new and varied job responsibilities for several months, Hope shared her understanding of her relatively new situation and reflected on what it was like when she was first told about the change.

> Well, the first day when I was told to go downstairs and do the training, I was a little bit upset, but I didn't let my supervisor know I was upset. I kept it to myself. And then the person who was training us, I said to him, "do you have any paper or pamphlet for me to read?" They said no. They said "I'm showing you, and that's it." So I guess what it boils down to now is they want you to learn the job and it's not, you're shown and, then you can go ahead and do it while you are learning [and] ask questions. (PI #3, p. 9)

Although Hope thought herself to be a "hands on" learner earlier in the program, she asked for "pamphlets" to help her learn what she needed to know to feel more able to do what she was asked. She asked for the reading materials, she said, because she wanted to learn "the right way" to operate the machines in her new jobs. Hope "didn't let my supervisor know that I was upset" that there was no paperwork, but she approached the person who was doing the training to ask for help. At Polaroid, she stated, "Seniority use to count. It doesn't anymore." Now, what mattered, in Hope's view, was having the "skills" necessary to do the job—or jobs. In addition to the required "skills" to perform her new tasks competently, Hope needed to tolerate the ambiguity of not knowing which of the three jobs she would do when she arrived for her 11 PM to 7 AM shift after an hour-long commute from home.

In the third interview, Hope talked about the changes in her workplace, the changes in what was required of her, and why she was disappointed with her training. She also highlighted the ways in which learning in the program was helping her to succeed. "You don't have any paperwork, nothing to go back on. So whatever they show you, you got to do. And I think this program, it gives me, my mind more thinking." Hope recognized that she had "come a long way" since beginning the program.

> **So I've come a long way with everything that was going on, and there's a lot of changes on my job.** . . . Well, there's last, week before last, I didn't know if I was going to have a job to go work. Told us there was going to be a layoff. So we didn't know who was going. And since January, I have to learn two more jobs. . . . So at nights when I'm going, I don't know if I'm going to my job that I was on practically 16 years, or I'm going to go on any of the other two jobs. And the way they are teaching us those jobs is hands on training. You don't have any paperwork, nothing to go back on. So whatever they show you, you got to do. And I think with this program, it gives me, my mind to more thinking. [*So you think the program has helped you with having this job problem?*] Yes, we just move in, because I can go in tonight and they say "okay go back to your regular job." I can go tomorrow night and they say go to [another job]. **I can do the new job, but not as perfect as the one that I have been on that I can go and know the basic.** I know what to do and if I'm making the product and it's not right, I know what the defects are. Well I think, my mind to think more **because before I don't think if, if I wasn't in this program if I could, I didn't say I couldn't handle it but I don't think I could go into it and get involved and get to know it as fast as I did.** (PI #3, p. 4)

In Hope's view, the program helped her "mind to think more" and this, in turn, helped her be better able to perform competently in her work. She also talked about how she thought the learning in the program made her better able to adjust to not knowing which of her three "jobs" she would do when she began work each day. She said that before participating in the program, she would not have been able to do this. At the end of the program, Hope said she had changed and noted the specific aspects of her life that supported her in making these changes—namely, the program, her teachers, and work.

> I appreciate the program, and I appreciate what Polaroid did. And . . . **I appreciate the time the teachers took with us, when we didn't understand, and show us, to let us understand. And [the teachers] didn't think because we are grown-up,** we should have known. **I'm proud of myself. And I'm proud that Polaroid gave us the opportunity** [so] **that we could . . . do it.**

Hope demonstrated a change in how she understood her role and her work. She grew to talk in more abstract ways about the appreciation she felt for Polaroid and to orient to her inner psychological experience (i.e., feeling "proud" of herself and "proud" of Polaroid), indicating that a Socializing way of knowing was now prominently organizing her meaning system (i.e., 3/2).

Later in the interview, Hope reflected on the changes she noticed in herself. Like other learners, she no longer felt "scared" to ask questions. Also like other learners, Hope reported being able to "write better" and "explain" herself better after the program—and she emphasized that these skills helped her at work. The program seemed to provide a holding environment that supported Hope as she grew to better manage her work and her life.

> Mm-hum [I feel proud of myself]. And I know, I explain thing[s] much better, and

> . . . I write much better, now. And I think, I wouldn't say scared to speak up, but sometime I would say, maybe, I'm, I don't say the right word. But now . . . I'm not that scared anymore. I'm more confident.

Like many learners, Hope reported feeling more "confident."

Hope told us that she was proud of her accomplishments, and she talked about the ways the program helped her to "look ahead." In her words,

> I'm proud that, that what I started, I finished. And I want to be, if I start another program, I want to finish it, too. I don't want to stop in the middle. Unless they're circumstances that I have to. But if there is no circumstances, I'd like to finish it. Because when you start something, and you finish it. **It really make you look ahead, to see that you could do more than you thought you could do.** 'Cause if you can succeed at this, you, it may take a longer time for what you're going to start, but if you want it, you succeed. It make me feel that it's, It's never too late to get an education. And you're never too old. And there are a lot of **opportunities** out there. You just gotta reach for it.

Hope can now look ahead and see "more opportunities" for herself. She realized she "could do more" than she had previously thought possible.

The Socializing Way of Knowing

While we have discussed various features of the Socializing way of knowing in the previous section, here we will highlight how learners solely bound by this way of knowing understood their roles as workers, their relationships with supervisors, and how learning in the program helped them at work. Two learners, Pierre and Tough, demonstrated a fully and solely operating Socializing way of knowing at both program start and completion. Rita grew to demonstrate a fully and solely operating Socializing way of knowing at program completion.

Being understood *and feeling respected* by other people in the workplace (i.e., supervisors and coworkers) was of key importance to these learners. All demonstrated that they identified with other people's opinions of them or, as was the case with Pierre, other people's imagined perceptions of them. With this way of knowing, a person is "made up by" (Kegan, 1994) or defined by the opinions and expectations of valued others.

Changes in Relationships with Supervisors and Coworkers

Many of these learners, like those who demonstrate an Instrumental/Socializing way of knowing, talked about how their relationships with supervisors and authority figures mattered to them. When faced with a situation or dilemma at work, rather than turning inward to decide what they needed to do, they would turn to a supervisor, a valued authority, to see what they *should* do. Being understood and listened to by others, especially supervisors, was critical to these learners. In fact, when asked about aspects of their work and work competencies, they often replied by talking about what *other* people had told them about their job performance.

Pierre, a learner who rarely talked about his supervisor (perhaps because his boss left before the end of the program), was an exception. Pierre also rarely mentioned his coworkers during the interviews (except to say that one of the other learners in the program, Christopher, worked in his department). However, Pierre mentioned that he appreciated the vote of confidence his "boss" demonstrated by signing the papers to approve Pierre's request to enroll in the program. Interestingly, Pierre could envision how he, as a worker, would be better able to support his boss with more highly developed skills.

> And my boss so happy for me to come and get that [diploma] because he knows what I'm capable, but just for a little thing to hold me back. So with that chance, with that opportunity, I could help him more. And he's so happy to . . . take money from his budget to pay for me and then I can get here. (PI #1, p. 4)

Pierre appreciated and valued his boss's approval, but unlike other learners with this way of knowing, talked about him as a major source of support or encouragement.

Changes in Constructions of Work

These learners oriented more to their inner psychological experience and spoke more often about the influence of work on their emotions. Most of these learners told us they needed "more education" to "move ahead" or "grow" in their jobs. All of these learners spoke about how earning a diploma would help them become eligible for promotions at work—education would help them in their jobs and to achieve other life goals. For example, Pierre, who grew up in a poor country where many people needed to work three jobs and earned a very low salary, "figure[d] out education, that's a strength for people's living. Without an education, life would be so hard." In Pierre's view, being able to "help" oneself means being able to "explain" oneself. Like many learners in our sample across ways of knowing, Pierre seemed to think a person who could "explain" himself well would enjoy greater chances of being considered for promotions and other benefits.

Changes in Developing Skills & Competencies at Work

These learners, all non-native speakers of English, said one reason they enrolled in the program was to improve their expressive English skills. They told us they wanted to improve their speech so they would be able to understand others and be understood by others. Most said they did not want their coworkers or supervisors to think they were "stupid" just because their English skills were not well developed.

All of these learners spoke about feeling more "confident" as workers because of learning in the program. Many reported better communication skills as a result of their program participation. Rita, for example, spoke not only about the difference her improved reading and writing skills made in her relationships at work and at home, but also about being able to communicate more clearly. She wanted to share with others how highly she valued education. In the following passage, Rita reflected on her experience of being invited to deliver a speech to more than 60 children and their parents at her church. The skills she had learned in the program, she said, helped her have the confidence to do this. In the last interview, she recalled what is was like to share with members of her community that day.

> All the parents, all the parents, the church was full. I tell them to never give up their dreams. A lot of things I feel for them to reach and right now, all of them that's young, they have the whole world inside of their hand, they just can't see it right now, but couple of years from now they will open up and see the good of education. I regret myself that . . . I didn't go to school 20 years ago when I came to America. But I never give up my dreams, I always say someday I will go to school.

> Everything in this world [you] have to have an [education] for it. This was my time and this is not the end of it.

Significantly, at the end of the program, Rita was able to articulate an abstract vision for the future and to see the world from the children's perspective as well as her own. She said it was important that children, in general and her own, "reach" for their educational goals; she knew children may not be able to recognize the value of education right now, "but couple of years from now, they will open up and see the good of education." Rita was able to take her children's perspective, to stand in their shoes, but with her own vision and perspective to recognize their potential and to realize they do not know this yet. She understood a bigger picture of time, her life, and what was important to her, and she could see it was part of the process of making her "dream" a reality. We marked this as an important change in Rita's understanding of her experience (and a demonstration of her now solely operating Socializing way of knowing).

Pierre, Rita, and other Socializing knowers shared a desire to improve their communication skills at the beginning of the program and reported feeling better able to communicate with people at work, and in the world, at the program's end. For example, most of Pierre's self-confidence was directly tied to both his expressive English ability and the way he thought other people perceived him. This is especially important because learners who make sense of their experience with a Socializing way of knowing derive their view of their *own* competence with how others perceive their ability. For non-native English speakers making meaning with a Socializing way of knowing, this seems especially profound because they believe others find them incompetent when they have difficulty expressing themselves. While all of the learners in this sample who were non-native speakers spoke of wanting to speak English better, Pierre's case illuminates how this experience is understood from a Socializing way of knowing.

In the following passage from the last interview, we see that Pierre wants the respect of others and that he thinks his expressive English skills are keeping this from him. As a quality control person at Polaroid, he needed to be able to "explain the negative and positive impact of every single thing" he does at work.

> And my life doesn't mean money to. I know everybody work to make money. I want to feel comfortable because one thing, **without good English speaking here, you don't have good respect.** Somebody doesn't care about what somebody do, don't care about. In my job, because most people at the class, they were all machinery people, do one job. Okay. Start the machine. . . . Myself, I don't do that. I am on the quality team and I have to explain the negative and positive impact on every single thing I am doing. I have to explain, if I don't do it, why? And if I have to take [fluid], I have to know plus or minus, all that. I have to say, okay, I am going to increase the temperatures, what that does for that. So that means speaking. . . . And in my, I call my department, Talk Radio because you have to say something all the time. I call it Talk Radio because they are mostly talking. (PI#4, p. 15)

Pierre shared his view that "life doesn't mean money" (which would be an Instrumental construction). He believes a person *must* speak English well to have "good respect." In his work, it is essential that he speak and communicate with coworkers and supervisors "all the time." When asked what was most important to him about having other people understand him, Pierre explained why being able to communicate with other people mattered to him: "What's come to your [mouth], is how your mind sound. . . . The way you sound, that's the way people judge." Pierre was concerned about how other people evaluate him and what they think of him. As a Socializing knower, this kind of concern is of ultimate importance to Pierre because he derives his sense of self-worth from other people's opinions of him. Pierre added more about why being able to communicate well is important at work.

> And I go to a meeting, communicate with people, to know how to make word go, understand your word, have your idea go along, that's communication. All that.

Communicating with coworkers and supervisors was an important component of Pierre's day-to-day life at work. He reported that he, like other learners, felt better able to express himself and understand others as a result of learning in the program.

Rita's Case: My Supervisor is My "Hero"

Rita's case is presented here for two reasons. First, it is a rich example of how a Socializing knower understood her relationship with her supervisor (demonstrating her relationship to an authority figure) and how her understanding of this relationship changed during the program. Second, it illuminates many of the ways in which learning in the program helped learners enact their roles as workers.

Rita had been working in the mailroom for eight years when our study began. Despite her layoff from Polaroid during the second trimester, she maintained a positive attitude towards Polaroid, grateful for the opportunity to attend school. She understood why the company had to let people go.

> They [the company] don't make money, so why they keep all the people? The sales is very low. The top the sales was [another country], but last year was flat. This year is still flat, . . . so that's why the things go down, and they still go down every day. It's not ended yet, but it's a wonderful place to work. (PI #3, p. 8-9)

Rita talked very positively about her relationship with her Polaroid supervisor. She valued this relationship; it seemed to provide a safe, holding context that supported Rita. The qualities she appreciated in her supervisor were similar to those she ascribed to a good teacher: one who provides "explanations," is "friendly," and serves as a "role model." When we asked her during her first interview to share examples of positive and negative learning experiences, Rita spoke about her work in Polaroid's mailroom. As she described her work and work-related responsibilities, she spoke with confidence and pride.

Rita said she "always talked to [my] supervisor about someday I have to go to school until I get graduated." Rita's supervisor was a woman who offered Rita important encouragement. When asked who in her life has she learned the most from, Rita named her supervisor. She felt she could approach her supervisor for help and support. Even if her supervisor did not know how to help, Rita could depend on her to find someone who could. Rita thought of her supervisor as her "hero."

> Well, in this new job that I have right now for eight years, my supervisor has been helpful for me. Some time I say, "Manuela, I don't know how to do this, and I need help with a job that have to go out special mailing to go out twice a week." She didn't know how to do it, but she always got somebody from the other building to show me how to do it. She was my hero. Because you know when you need the help, and somebody help you politely, nicely, and talk to you nice, you don't know yet, but you will learn this job. You will do that with your eyes closed. Someday, you will teach somebody else how to do it. I used to say, "Me? I will never learn

> this job." But it's never too late. If you always have faith in God, sooner you pray for, you know He is in your heart, anything is possible. (PI #1, p. 12)

Not only did Rita feel she could ask her supervisor for help with learning on the job at Polaroid, she could also ask her for help with homework. After Rita was asked what makes a good teacher, she discussed her supervisor's efforts to help her. "Explaining" was important to Rita—and she seemed to appreciate that her supervisor took the time to explain things to her when she was trying to learn. In her efforts to explain things to Rita, her supervisor was able to create a holding environment that both challenged and supported Rita in her quest for learning.

> She helps me lots with my homework. When I was, I say, "Manuela, I have a problem with verbs and objects and stuff, I have a problem." She used to sit down and say, listen, "This is so and so, and this is so and so . . . " And I say, "Oh, now I get it." But she explains to me. But teachers sometimes they teach to you, "This is the north, this is the south, this is the west, and this is the east." When you turn around, you don't know which one is. My supervisor says, "Okay, you point to the north that way. You'll know that's north. You know the back is south. You now your left is west." Explaining it mean a lot. (PI #1, p. 14)

Rita's supervisor created a holding environment for her by helping with her homework, patiently explaining when Rita did not understand, demonstrating how to apply new skills, and "being there" when Rita needed emotional support and other forms of help.

In the last interview, Rita's thinking demonstrated a change in the way she understood her relationship with her supervisor. Rita's words illuminate how she now understood her relationship with her supervisor—a source of authority. Asked how she knows she is doing the right thing at work, Rita told us she knows something is right when the "supervisor says it is the right thing to do."

> [*What if she says, that's the way I want it done?*] I will do it. [*Even if you know it's the bad thing to do?*] I will do it. **Because that's her decision, she's the boss.** [*So even though you know it's wrong, you'll still do it.*] I would bring the point one time to her, and I will show her the problem. I said, now going to do it. [inaudible] before we start. If he or she say yes I will do it. **But I won't tell her [inaudible] I don't think this could/will work.** But if you'd like us to continue with this, we will do it. **Because she's the boss**. You cannot go. It's like, if you don't listen to your boss, . . . it's like you go somebody else's house and you tell them what to do in their house, no, no, no, no. **When I go to work, my supervisor, tell me to cut this and put it cross the street, my job is to pick up the building and put it across the street**. If I can't do it, I'll try. [*Even if you think the building is just right where it is?*] **You never say no to any supervisor**.

Rita then explained her reasoning about why she would never say "no" to a supervisor.

> **You can make the supervisor get mad**. A lot of times you have a raise, or you have promotion in the job, they will pull you down because you have bad attitude. I think attitude in the job is the worst thing you can have. [*So you think attitude is the worst thing you can have because it might cost you a promotion?*] Yes. [*Are*

> *there other reasons its bad to have an attitude like that?*] **You will lose a lot of friends. You will lose trust of your supervisor and co-workers**. So, you only gonna work for eight hours, doesn't worth. It's good to go to work and say hi in the morning and say goodbye in the afternoon without no problems.

Rita shows us what she understood to be the consequences for saying "no" to a supervisor: The supervisor "gets mad," "you will lose a lot of friends," and "you will lose trust of your supervisor and coworkers." In her view, doing what is expected of you and doing it with a good attitude will keep you in good standing with your supervisor, friends, and coworkers, and will protect your chances for raises and promotions. Rita talked about the "promotion" and "raise," but the other reasons—"losing friends" and "losing the trust of supervisors and coworkers"—seem more important to her than missing a raise or a promotion.

Rita's case also illuminates how she understood her program learning to be helpful to her at work. During the second interview, Rita spoke with new confidence about her newly developed competency in math. We mark this as a *change that she noticed in herself* because she did not report feeling this way about her math abilities before participating in the program. Rita described this "confidence" (locating it in herself) when she talked about how program learning was helping her to do things at work that she "never knew" how to do before.

> **I feel confidence of myself if I go work any place** that they give me, like shipping and receiving. Or I mean any job that they have the math that they require you to do the math. And I don't have anymore problem. But before I started this program, I couldn't do that job. Even if I got the job to do that. And I couldn't because I don't know which way I'll start. And especially on the calculator that we have right now is different. We didn't, it's different from what I had. To use . . . the percentage and stuff like that, I never knew those things. **But now I feel confidence doing any kind of job with any kind of math. It changed my life. It changed my life.**

Rita highlights the important ways in which building mathematical competency has "changed [her] life." Although many learners talked about how important it was for them personally and professionally to develop their "skills," Rita's experience helps us understand the meaning and importance of developing "skills" within Polaroid. These new skills, she reported, not only made her job easier but also gave her confidence to feel she could handle math demands in other jobs.

Not only did Rita voice her appreciation of Polaroid for making it possible for workers to participate in this program, she also said she valued this particular CEI Adult Diploma Program because it was longer in duration than most other educational training experiences offered to Polaroid employees. In September 1998, Rita told us educational/training programs at work are usually 36 hours long, and she believed this was *not* enough time to learn. When asked what was most important to her about the support she received, Rita explained:

> Because if she [the supervisor] didn't sign, I would never come into this class, you know? So when I tell her, well, they have this high school program, she say "Give me the paper. Fill out the application and give me, I'll sign for it." When I heard it would be like $4,500 I said "Manuela, but that's too much." She say, "You don't pay for it, why you worry about it?" I say, "If you pay for it, I will take it." But she always say, "Rita, you should go to school. Because Polaroid is big company, is

> good company. God bless them. The best company in town." **If you don't want to work for Polaroid today, you want to work for another company tomorrow, at least you have your education**. And if you don't want to do what you're doing right now, you can move on and do something different. **Every time you learn a new thing is one high AKP levels, AKP stands for Applied Knowledge Skills**. Every time you learn something, your skills are going up. And don't think if you are doing the job, you are comfortable in that job, that is all about. Maybe today, but tomorrow you need education. Take a computer course, take something different that will change your life style. [*So their advice has been very helpful to you?*] Very helpful.

Like many learners, Rita mentioned the importance of the AKP at Polaroid. In fact, her supervisor reminded her that even if she were to leave Polaroid, she would "still have her education" (highlighting one of the company's intentions in offering the program). During this second interview, Rita explained other ways the program made things "easier" for her.

> At work? [*or at home?*] Outside? Inside of myself? [AT WORK] Everywhere. Before sometimes when I'd say something at work and they'd say "Wait a minute, speak English." I'd tell them "English is my fourth language." And it's very hard for me to speak like you do because I never study like you. But if I study 20 years ago, if I went to school, believe it or not, now I would speak different. **Now sometimes when I tell them something they say, "Now you go to school." I say "Yes. And I will learn step by step."** But I will learn different things every day. . . . Before, if they told me write something, sometimes I say, "My goodness, I have a friend I say how you spell this, how you spell that?" **Now I don't have too many problems no more. Yes, it's easier.**

Rita observed concrete changes in her skills at work. For instance, when asked to write, she had fewer spelling problems. This focus on concrete skill development was important to her and her ability to do her work.

In the last interview, Rita spoke in greater depth about other changes she noticed in herself, which she attributed to learning in the program. She talked about feeling "confident" in her capacity to learn. Like others, Rita noticed an important change in herself; she no longer was "ashamed" to ask questions. When asked what was the "most important" learning she had experienced, Rita said it was learning the "history of America" and reasoned that she "should know" about it because she lives here.

> I learn a lot that . . . before, that I never know. And I learn how to read and write, and I learn how to spell. I had a lot of problems before, I learn, and I felt so **confident** now to open up any book and read and understand what I read. Because, **before,** sometime I used to read, and then I don't know what I read and I was confused. **And then I was ashamed** to ask, people. "What is this?" Because they said, "You've been in America so long, you don't know what to do?" You cannot learn if you don't open the door. There is no way for you to reach your goal if you don't go to school. You might learn a lot from outside, but. . . . [*So what's the most important thing about the learning that you've done?*] The history of America . . . Because I live here, and I should know. If anybody asks me for anything, and I will

> be glad to answer them back. [*And why would it feel so good to be able to answer them back?*] **To be myself.** If anybody ask me right now, Rita, "What you been in these 18 months?" **I don't feel ashamed to** tell them I been in school for 18 months. Or if they ask me, "What did you learn in 18 months?" I will tell them, which before if they asked I would say, well, I never go to school, [and] that [felt] bad. . . .

Learning in the program helped Rita feel more confident about asking other people questions. Importantly learning in the program helped Rita and other participants answer other people's questions and better understand others. For Rita, this meant that she was able to "be myself."

The Socializing/Self-Authoring Transitional Way of Knowing & The Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

Four learners demonstrated a Socializing/Self-Authoring way of knowing at the start of the program. Of these, Paulo, Daniel, and Magda demonstrated new underlying meaning systems at the end of the program (see Table 2). In addition to these four learners, Jeff demonstrated a solely operating Self-Authoring way of knowing at both the beginning and end of the program.

All of these learners except Magda talked about how learning in the program helped them "feel stronger" about enacting their roles as workers. All seemed to take greater responsibility and ownership of their work. They had a clear sense of (and a capacity to reflect on) how learning in the program helped them access information they would then use to make *their own* decisions in their work life. They were excited about understanding how to make better decisions for themselves.

Unlike most other learners, when they spoke about increased self confidence they talked about how their learning made them less reliant on others and less likely to make mistakes. In many cases, like other learners in our sample, they also talked about how important it was that this program helped them feel more comfortable asking questions.

Constructions of Work—"Creating Opportunities," Working Independently—and Feeling "Strong"

These learners talked about how education and their learning in the program gave them more "opportunities" at work and in life. All shared a common goal—wanting to be "better educated"—and reported that this would help them in their work. They reflected on both the cognitive and abstract psychological experience of their work. Many told us that learning in the program helped them to feel "stronger" at work.

For example, one of Christopher's goals as a worker was to become better educated. As he said during the first interview, "The most important reason [for wanting the diploma], I want it just because without a diploma, for me, in [his Caribbean home country] or here, you're nothing." Additionally, he wanted to learn more to "feel strong." He explained that he thought an education would help him better fulfill his role as a worker. Christopher wanted to be able to make good decisions for himself.

> I feel strongly, I'm look inside, so I don't have to go to him [his team leader] next time. Because I feel so happy when, you know, I can help myself, when I can do things. . . . So, if I can do something without asking people, I'll be glad. But that doesn't mean I'm selfish; I don't like asking questions. But I'm happy when I can, you know, do something for myself. Show me what I can do. Demonstrate.

> Helping myself solving problems. I think it's a good thing for me, you know what I mean, so I don't have to worry. I feel happy. [*So you feel like you learned about this computer program by asking questions sometimes, but people weren't thrilled when you asked questions.*] Yeah. . . . They didn't say they want you to do it, you know, but budding angry, so you don't have to go inside people's mind to read . . . what they meant. . . . By looking at them physically you can see by the way they act. "Don't ask me anymore." . . . So, you can do it for yourself. So now, I just get angry about it. . . . Not to the people, to my self. I get angry, and I say to myself that, "Okay, I want to learn that stuff, for not asking . . . anymore." (PI #1, 8)

The desire to "feel strong" and not rely on others for help at work was important to Christopher. Wanting to work more independently was a common theme for these workers.

Christopher's desire to feel "strong" at work and work independently *changed* from a goal to an accomplishment he attributed to his learning in the program. In February 1999, when asked how, if at all, learning in the program helped make things better at work, Christopher replied:

> All right . . . at work, I'm using different equipment. . . . So now, [to use] the [latest] technology . . . you have to be educated . . . when you are very educated . . . I think, like, that, then you would be [able] to do all kind of things to moving things around with the mouse using the computer, writing the memos, things like that, you know, that will give you a high—put you in a high class [promotion] . . . where can do things for yourself . . . you don't have to ask for people [for help] all of the time. You know, if there is something . . . in front of you and then you can do it—what the paper says, and then I don't need to go to [anyone] for help . . . which is very good, you know. So that is what I'm saying. . . . So this class have me—start to build me up . . . so I'm learning things. (PI #3, p. 7)

This ability to work more independently contributes both to Christopher's sense of himself as a worker and his feelings about his job. He reported using what he learned in the program to better understand and perform his work at Polaroid. The better he understood the work—the process that the machine goes through or the process involved in making film—the more responsibility he was able to assume and the more he felt he could work independently. This sense of responsibility for his work seemed to gratifying him. "I really love it," he said. Christopher said if he was able to do more at work, it would lead to a "high class," meaning he would be eligible for a higher position at work and would be able to work more independently.

Like Christopher, Paulo said education would help him feel "strong" and better able to meet the requirements of his work in dome lamination at Polaroid. Like all of the non-native speakers with this way of knowing, Paulo voiced a desire to improve his communication skills and thought improved communication skills would help him work more effectively. In the first interview, Paulo described the kind of writing skills his job required and explained what it would mean to write better reports.

> When I do my reports to the engineer, when I do the stuff, before I do small reports. "I found this and this and it's fixed." Now I say this fixed, coming through this one, this one, this way or that way. **You try to push your report**. . . . You know a little bit about how you write better. You know how the words that you say . . . [*So you say you're writing bigger words and more words and*

> *more detailed?*] Yes. In the beginning I write small reports. Because I know the words I put. **I have no idea how I'm supposed to be in the reports**. I know the things I'm supposed to put on the report, but I don't know how I'll write. So every time you learn, your report gets a little bigger. (PI #1, p. 20)

Paulo needed to be able to convey information to other workers, engineers, and supervisors in his written reports. His data highlights an important theme common to learners who made sense of their experience in this way of knowing: They all spoke about trying to "push" themselves to do better in their work. Doing their jobs well and pushing themselves (internally) was important to these learners. At the same time, Paulo was concerned about writing reports that would please important others (i.e., his supervisors and the engineers with whom he works).

Feeling "very, very, very strong" is an important concept in understanding the *changes* in Paulo's self-confidence and in his perceptions of improved competence as a worker. In the third interview, he explained why writing skills were important to him at work—the first time he talked about feeling "strong."

> Yes, the skills is very important to me. This is very important to me because now I'm making . . . account. **I write my reports; before, I went to the meeting, I write my reports, I don't know exactly what I going to say on a meeting**. In the day I make my paperwork, say everything, the defects I found on the material, if machine work is okay, so if I have some problems between this time and this time. So that's very important when you [are writing reports]. [*So it sounds like there are very specific skills that you have improved.*] Exactly. [*Has that, has your feelings about yourself, has that changed?*] **Yes. I feel very, very, very strong**. (PI #3, p. 3)

Paulo talked about how the skills he was learning in the program helped him demonstrate greater competence as a worker. He reflected on his internal experience and feelings of greater self-efficacy. Later in this interview, Paulo talked more about the changes he noticed in his life and what it means to him to feel "strong." Paulo explained:

> I feel strong because I know the program to buy the house four years ago, you see. But now if I go, I went there because I don't understand. The kind of strong I feel, is because now I can . . . [with] this program, I understand everything, you see. **I feel free**. . . . I feel free to explain anything to say anything to understand. That's the [inaudible] when you feel strong. When you help your kids look for good college, or you help your kids look for good school or better school than before. **So you feel strong**. When you go to the doctor you [don't have no confidence], so now you're confident with you and your doctor. So you can speak to your doctor. So your doctor tell you anything, you understand exactly; you go to dentist or you go anyplace else. So that's, you feel strong when you help yourself or your family. (PI #3, 11)

Paulo felt "strong" because he had a greater sense of being able to communicate with others—both at work and in life. Like other learners with this way of knowing, Paulo appreciated how program learning helped him change his behaviors and thinking. He turned inward and discussed his experience.

We learn that Paulo's understanding of "strong" is multilayered. Feeling strong means knowing he is able to buy a house, whereas he did not know what to do previously. Feeling strong means being able to communicate with people at work, being able to express himself orally and in writing. It also means being able to help his family, being able to speak to a doctor, and being able to help himself—being able to *be* more independent. Feeling "strong" helps Paulo "feel free." Importantly, Paulo reported feeling a strong internal *knowing* that he can do these things at this point in the program—he did not conceptualize his role as *carrying out* these important responsibilities. His understanding of "strong" goes beyond concrete tasks; it represents many things for him: self-reliance, greater independence, and freedom.

Magda, like Paulo, was from West Africa and also needed to write reports in her work at Polaroid. Magda mainly works on a computer; taking "measurements" and looking for "data" in the computer are some of her everyday tasks. She talked about "wanting to be able to do everything 100 percent" in her work. Giving 100 percent seemed related to Magda's desire to get things done efficiently. In the second interview, she explained why being efficient is important to her in her job. Asked if she thought her learning in the program helped her do her work at Polaroid, Magda said:

> Well, I think it matters, you know, because the more I know, the more efficient I am, but that is for me. It is good for me because I can demonstrate a lot of things and because you can get promoted. I can get a better job. I can get other things. (PI #2, p.9)

Magda indicated that learning mattered to her work for several reasons: She can be "more efficient," and she can then get promotions and different jobs. Magda's focus on her own efficiency emphasizes her concern for improving her abilities, to meet self-determined goals. Also, she has the capacity to engage in self-evaluation ("the more I know, the more efficient I am") and reported feeling her skills had improved, making her more effective in her work. Magda demonstrates a Self-Authoring construction, as she seems most concerned with her own abilities, not what others say about them.

Jeff, like Magda, talked about the importance of challenging, "interesting" work. For Jeff, what made work "interesting" was that work was always "different." "No five days are the same. It's always different. . . . Even though it's the same machine, and it never changes, but there's always something different. It's not repetitious." This illustrates Jeff's larger perspective on his work. In the same interview, when invited to talk about an important learning experience, Jeff discussed work.

> 'Cause it was an **interesting piece of machinery**. It was a new developed, a new machine. It was a high tech machine. It was a machine that was more automatic than manual. Most of your machines back in the old days were all manually, you had to do everything to the machine. The machines we have today, it's a half and half process, it's automatic and manual, but it's more automated than it is manual. [. . . *What made that good for you in terms of learning?*] 'Cause you had to know, it's hard to explain. . . . Yeah, it was **challenging**. It was something that kept my interest in learning the machine. [*It wasn't so easy for you?*] **Right, it's hard. Which makes it interesting to me**. (PI #1, p. 9)

Jeff shared his sense that work and difficult tasks are interesting. It is important to keep himself challenged at work. Work is stimulating when it is *not repetitious*. Jeff believed his work presented him with various challenges because "there's always something" different or some new aspect that keeps him challenged. For many of these learners, the predictable nature of work helps them to feel competent.

Jeff felt in charge of himself (a Self-Authoring capacity) and of his work—he demonstrated over and over again how he was in control of his work. During the first interview, he said his last job was more interesting than his current one making batteries. In contrast to most other learners who reported they would need to consult a supervisor for help or seek directions/help from the computer if faced with a new defect (while were working on a machine), Jeff reported preferring to figure things out on his own.

Understandings of Relationships with Supervisors

Like Socializing knowers, many of the learners who made sense of their experience in a way reflecting the Socializing/Self-Authoring way of knowing still considered their supervisors' evaluations important; however, they reported they wanted to be *recognized* and *respected* by their supervisors. In other words, these workers *knew* they were doing well and performing competently in their roles as workers; for them, being "respected" by coworkers and supervisors mattered.

For example, in June 1999, Christopher talked about work and how he made up time if he was late for work because it was important to *him*—not because it was important to his supervisor. It was important to Christopher that his supervisor respected him, but also that he respected himself in this relationship.

> I just do it for, for myself, as a respect. . . . So I don't play with the time. I don't play with my supervisor, I respect him as a boss. You know, I do what he asks me to do. So, I know the time is time. I don't play with the time especially. I'm very sensitive about that kind of thing . . . I respect myself.

Daniel, a team leader at Polaroid, told us he assumed responsibility for supervising others. In his supervisory role, he believed that it was his responsibility to teach those who worked for him. He reflected on how his job as a supervisor required many of the same skills as teaching. For Daniel, being a supervisor was like being a teacher. In the third interview, Daniel spoke about how he understood the nature of his supervisory role.

> That's right, I teach every day. I'm the one that gives them instruction, I work with the blueprints. If there is any problem, I'm the one to solve it. And I deal with a lot of paperwork from different customers, paperwork from the government, from, some of them come from Europe, all over the world. All of this paperwork comes through my hands. I have to show people how, if they don't know how to do it I have to tell them how to do it. I have to show them the techniques how to do things fast or safe also. And I have all of that. That's my job. (PI #3, p. 15)

Daniel reflected on both the cognitive and abstract psychological experience of being a supervisor. He seems to know both his goal for teaching people (in concrete and more abstract ways) and that people skills are required in this kind of teaching. This passage illustrates how Daniel conceptualized what it meant to be a supervisor and the thoughtful and caring way he supervised.

Before the last interview, Daniel learned a few fellow employees had recently been awarded raises. In his view, this was not fair because these people were not really qualified yet he, who was qualified, had not received a raise. At this time, Daniel demonstrated a change in the way he understood his and the larger situation at work. He was now able to admit to being angry (and owning his anger) and to reflect on what bothered him most—the unfairness of the situation. He recalled,

> When I found out that we been slow at my job, and I found out that a few people had raise. And I [didn't]. Two years ago, I do a lot of things. . . . I got a lot of responsibility, I try to I create different ideas, always active, and then you come to the point, and you see people getting raise that is not really qualified, then you feel mad. Feel angry . . . I been around everything, everybody push, push me here and there, as a matter of fact, the last few months, you know, they come back, everybody is looking for me, one need this, one need that. So I think you feel, unfair. For a couple of years I didn't get nothing [in terms of a raise]. I never been pushy for the raise at all, but when I see things like that happen, it makes me angry. Because what I do since I been working this company, I try to do my job and show that I'm doing a good job and improve myself, in a lot of things. That's why lot of things, lot of times you see a lot of supervisors, or whatever in charge of the job, they, when they play like that, it's like selfish.

Daniel had a perspective on the unfairness he saw in the situation; he saw himself as very competent and deserving a raise and was angry that he did not get one. Daniel understood this situation as involving more than extra compensation for the work he was doing or his supervisor's validation. Daniel wanted his good work recognized. We see that Daniel seemed to have his *own* standards of good work, and he was angry that he met them, but his supervisor did not recognize it. Like other learners making meaning in this way, Daniel cared most about *recognition* from his supervisor.

Daniel then stated that his work as a lead technician included supervising people. Treating those who work for him with respect was important to him—as was having them respect him.

> **I have people work for me. I recognize them, I show them respect them, they respect me also, and I put all my effort into what I do, I come up with different ideas.** I know how to train people in any machine, anything, I really have a lot of responsibility, but when it come to the point like this [not being recognized and getting a raise], **it makes you so angry, now, you feel like you go home and sit in there, relax, and forget about anything, just not to mention**. It's the way you been new things or old, you got a good feeling what you doing, and you see all the people around you, even they tell you, if you're not around, they're going to be in bad shape, and things like that. Then you see them do things like that [not give you a raise], it makes you. Even couple of people that work for me, went to talk to my supervisor. I didn't to her yet. And I tell them, why I didn't get a raise? [*They went for you?*] **For themselves, also**. Which they deserve. When I see them go to give somebody else money, I said you did good to go in there and tell her. And tell them, one of them come and tell me, I go in there and talk to her and tell her, can you explain what, how you evaluate the other person that you give the raise, did you see what I usually do? She told me that she get red and all that. I say that's a good question you ask her. . . . And like me, I was a lead, as a lead technician, they assume that they should be coming to me, and asking "How this person doing?" if they don't know how they doing, how they doing, and should be coming to me, how is this person, "You think they deserve a raise or something like that?" They never

> do that. I've been [more than 20] years in the company, and I think, I see that one of the reasons this company goes down is it's so unfair things like that. **Because you should have seen people, I'm not talk about myself, but even the people that work with me, that I see that work hard, they see how expensive the part is we make and all that, they** should have seen, then they see, look close and see if these people deserve money better than the other ones. [*So do you also feel angry that these people who work for you didn't get raises too?*] **Yes. I feel more angry that. . . . For that, than myself. Because I know they deserve, they work hard.**

Daniel was angry not only because his work was not acknowledged by his supervisors with a raise, but also *on behalf of the people who work for him* because they did not receive a raise—a raise he believed they deserved. He shows he has a perspective on his relationships with those who work for him; he was able to separate himself from the situation and to act on his own behalf (demonstrating a Self-Authoring capacity). He sees his situation as separate from the others' and advocates separately for those who work under him. At the same time, Daniel does not take a larger perspective on his part in the larger process. The absence of any mention of why things work like this points to a Socializing way of knowing. In no place do we hear Daniel discussing a larger, overarching perspective that holds it all together. He is not yet able to see himself within the context of the situation.

Transferring Learning, Improving Competencies, and Increasing Self-confidence

These learners making sense of their experience in a Socializing/Self-Authoring way of knowing told us how learning in the program was changing the way they enacted their role as workers. They said they were now able to work more efficiently and with greater confidence. Here, we highlight three main ways they transferred learning—and changed the way they worked. These learners reported the program helped them improve their writing skills to make better and more informative reports, employ new mathematical and computer competencies in their work, and use the Internet to access information, which helped them in their work and private lives.

For example, in the second interview, Magda talked about having greater confidence in her writing and how this developing competency helped her at work. Before the program, when she had to write something on paper, she needed to look it over several times before typing it into the computer. Now, she was able to type directly into the computer. This made things "easier" for her and helped her feel more confident at work. Asked how learning in the program was helping her at work, Magda said,

> Yes, everything's better for me because I get a lot of mistakes when I write, and I can pick up my tenses, my verbs, and I couldn't before and also, like, when I use a lot of computers and a lot of the times when I spell or write mistakes or problems, then I used to write on a piece of paper and then look at it over and over to see if it's right, but now I can like just type it in. I still do some of the things, like a hard word, I put it next to the paper, and I look at it, but things that I think are normal, things like everyday things, I just type it in. That makes my life easy because that, and then I feel more confident. (PI #2, 6)

In the third interview, Magda described her increased *self-confidence* in reading and writing; she felt "more comfortable to do certain things or write certain things, or read." Before participating in the program, Magda said, she did not have problems with reading, but now she "feels better" about being able to understand "certain words." In the third interview, we asked Magda if she noticed any changes in how she did her work. She replied,

> I've been doing it for so long that I, even then, I know what I was doing and, but again, this certainly see it more clearly. I knew what I was doing, I was trained to do them. But now, like, especially when I'm on the computer, when I read the, **I can be more confident to change things**. Before like I was a little bit intimidated. . . . But, you know, that, too, yes, it helps me in my job, too, yes. (PI #3, p. 9)

Magda makes an important distinction here between doing a job she was trained to do and doing a job that she feels more confident doing. The former seems to focus on what is needed to get a job done, while the latter involves deeper understanding. This improvement enabled her to recognize areas to fix but also gave her greater confidence she could change things. Magda recalled feeling "intimidated" and worried about doing "something wrong." It is important to keep these statements in the context of her work, as Magda does technical work in which "doing something wrong" could affect product quality.

Like Magda, other learners making sense of their experience in this way reported improvements in their ability to write more effectively at work—and they connected this new competency to learning in the program. Christopher, for example, spoke about his new ability to *know* when to "pause" when he was speaking and where to place commas when writing. Jeff also spoke about how the program helped him "better understand" the "meaning" of words and also how it helped him increase his vocabulary. All of these learners also reported feeling more comfortable about giving oral presentations. For example, Paulo talked about being able to speak more effectively in work meetings. "So, I go to the meeting. I say everything I want to say." Being able to talk about the defects he found was an important part of his job, and he felt better able to do this because of what he learned in the program.

Much like Magda, Paulo noticed his ability to write reports had improved, and he elaborated on how his improved writing skills were helping him at work.

> I do inspection on some kind of material supposed to go to outside for custom, so I have to write a report, so I used to inspect, but I don't used to write reports . . . I have to tell somebody else, "Oh, I found this kind of [defect], I know this kind of a [inaudible], but I don't know how I supposed to write on the paper." So now I don't have this kind of problem. (PI #4, 10)

Paulo felt able to do his work more independently. He no longer had trouble expressing his ideas in writing. Like several learners making meaning in this way, Paulo also reported greater competence and skill working with computers. In the second interview, he spoke about these changes in his skills and how they help in his work.

> I work on things for computers, the field for computer. I inspect sheet for sunglass. . . . So I'm very, very helpful. So my managers, my supervisors like the thing that I do now because I inspect the sheet. . . . I can do on a paper or on a [inaudible] one fourth is rejects. . . One fourth is rejects . . . I have to see on a computer how many is go all the way down, on a 500 [inaudible] one fourth rejects. Of 800, I found two feets rejects, something like that. I have to know a lot of reading, a lot of write . . . You have to write the names, you have to write the kind of the reject. I need a lot of help because I don't know exactly how to

> write those names, the rejects. **So now I don't have no problem** to write those kind of rejects. . . . I don't have no problems to put the rejects on the computers. I don't have no problem with to do my reports. I don't have no problems to go to the meetings and communication with my supervisor. (PI #2, p. 11-12)

This passage illustrates several aspects of Paulo's reported increased competence with computers—he no longer had any problems writing about work-related problems on the computer. He was able to explain his work's complexity and understood the importance of good writing/computer skills in his job. He also pointed out that his supervisors like what he is doing because his inspection work helps identify the rejects (i.e., helping to ensure product quality). Finally, like other learners with this way of knowing, Paulo talked about his increased ability to seek and find information from a variety of sources.

All learners making sense of their experience with this way of knowing reported how learning in the program helped them feel increasingly confident in their roles as workers. For example, Christopher noted how learning in the program helped him to feel more confident—to believe in himself—and said this was "a good feeling."

> We got graduate, we have a high school diploma. . . . People come and shake our hands, which is a good feeling. Make me feel very strong. Getting confident to yourself, to me, I think is know yourself, to believe in yourself. You have to believe in yourself. Doing stuff and doing different things. **It's like knowledge, you have to demonstrate inside your brain your mind, if you capable of doing such kinds of things**.

Christopher talked about pleasing himself and the importance of knowing himself, "demonstrat[ing] inside your brain, your mind, if you capable of doing such things." Learning in the program helped him because, as he said, he was now better able to think through a process. In this passage, Christopher seems to demonstrate that he was not reliant on anyone else's assessment or validation. The best thing about feeling that way was "you feel more powerful, you feel important to yourself, you feel you are somebody, you feel you are doing something good, you feel proud of yourself. That's what it is."

Jeff spoke about an important change he noticed in himself—an increased self-confidence in his intellect. Jeff told us this was an area in which he had never felt confident before. At the end of the program, he shared his new understanding of himself—he now saw himself as smarter than he had before.

> I guess, getting the satisfaction out of knowing that, some of the thing I thought I had forgot in math. . . . And different areas like that, and the English part, and stuff like that, the science part. It was gratifying to know that, once we started and got into the course, that a lot of the stuff was easier to pick up. I picked up really fast. . . especially on the math. I surprised myself. . . . Because I thought I'd totally, I just, through the years, just disregarded math and all. And, yeah, I **shocked myself, knowing, when I found out I could do it, even though I hadn't done it for a long time**. . . . **There's more up there than I thought there was** . . . as far as knowledge . . . I guess it . . . kind of like, made me went to sleep or something like that. **But I guess it's like once you open something, it just pours out. . . . It's**

> **there.** It's just getting you out, I guess, **which is what happened through this course.** (PI #4, pp. 1-2)

Throughout data collection, we asked these learners who or what they thought contributed to the changes they noticed in themselves. Many learners, regardless of way of knowing, named their program teachers as having helped them learn. Others also named specific pedagogical practices the program teachers employed(as discussed in Chapter Six). Several talked about experiences in the program (e.g., walking the Freedom Trail in Boston) as supporting their learning. However, unlike the great majority of learners who made sense of their experience with other ways of knowing, these learners named *themselves* as supports to their learning in addition to other people or program features.

Paulo's Case: Opening Up the World through Education and Access

> I think everybody needs school. Sometimes some people be afraid to come to school because maybe it's been so long I don't go to school, maybe I don't catch nothing. But that's not true. You catch it. Every day you catch one thing or two, that's a lot on the end of the year. (***Paulo,*** March 1998)
>
> Many people has laid off, so before I come to this course, I feel somebody talk about layoff, but now I don't feel like it gonna be me, because I know how if you understand to read or understand to write or speak English better, understand people. Since I started this course, I have more opportunity on my job, I have two promotion, and I keep wait another one soon because before I came there was no instruction, I read I can't expand, so now I can read, I can understand, I can write. I work on a fork machine, but before I started this school, everything I have to have somebody to write for me, inspection for special material, but I don't know how I write any information. So now I can write myself. . . . When I go to the meeting, so I have lots of thing to say, but I can say my piece, so now I don't have no problems. I learned a lot in the math . . . so now I don't have no problems, so not so on my job, so I help my kids on school, too. Again I feel very strong with the schools, so I can buy my own house, I know exactly how I budget my money better, I know how I can any kind of instruction before you buy the house, something so you have to know exactly what you have to do supposed to do to manage the house. So I feel very strong in this course so I think when I finish in the schools, I am not gonna stop. . . . I would like to continue. So I have computer, since I come to school, I know that better, computer, so I know that in school you have to know computer, but I enjoy, too, some place on the computer because I [know the] Internet. (***Paulo,*** February, 1999)

Paulo, who immigrated from West Africa in the mid-1980s and had been working for Polaroid ever since, had a very clear sense of how learning in the program provided him with greater opportunities at work, and more broadly, access to information in a way that he had never had before in this country. His case highlights a critical theme prevalent among learners with this way of knowing: education provides access to greater opportunities.

Learning in the program classes has, in Paulo's view, helped him communicate better with colleagues and supervisors at work and in other areas of his life. It has also helped him understand

and access information from a variety of sources, which has created more "opportunities" and enhanced his ability to make his *own*, more informed decisions. Like other learners demonstrating this way of knowing, Paulo felt his new knowledge and more highly developed skills have changed his work life. At the end of the program, he felt he was a more confident and competent worker, and a more empowered person who could navigate effectively within the American system.

Paulo's work as a team leader in dome lamination involved collaborating with his team and others, reading and writing, and communicating with engineers and shop floor workers. In the first interview, he talked with pride about his work and self-determined goals. Like all other learners making meaning in this way, Paulo viewed himself as competent in his role.

> I do very good at repair camera. So when they start a new camera. One goes in here. I'm the first one he invites to come with him to start to do a new camera. So I do new cameras, I know well about the new cameras, I work and help with repairs, until the cameras go upstairs. So, I'm the first to come for this kind of job. So associates with more experience can stay in this building or stay on an order. We have less experience, work in Bedford, that's too far. Go in Waltham, so I stay in this building. More experience. So when I come to N-2 up on different kind of job. When I come to N-2, I help on the same team. There's just a few different teams, so I say, okay, going to have a lot of chance, because a lot of temporaries work in this building. So we're supposed to replace the temps. Because the camera is supposed to go make on overseas.

Paulo was the first person consulted for camera repair (this suggests evidence of his competence in this job). He was highly motivated to achieve his work and life goals. He wanted "hard" jobs. This was how he got the "dome lamination" job.

> So when I come to the N-2, so I say, "I'm going to see the hardest job to do." The hard one. The hard one . . . I'm going to see the hard one because I don't like to do easy things. When I found out [about the job opening], I say to my supervisor, I say, "I'd like to learn to do dome lamination, or OEMs." . . . put the parts together, this is make sunglasses, make glass indoors for the planes. (PI #1, p. 15)

Paulo told us that two months later, he "bid for another job." He won this bid and succeeded in getting another job working with chemicals. Like other learners making meaning in this way, Paulo took initiative to learn on the job (e.g., learning to repair cameras during his "breaks" from work).

Paulo talked about how he needed to show his results to his supervisor and how this changed for him; he attributed this change to learning in the program. We think "results" in this context meant his grades, though he also used the term "results" when referring to more technical aspects of his work on machines. When the interviewer asked him in the second interview how he knows he has learned what he wanted to learn, Paulo replied,

> Oh, sure. Because every time I have results from my teachers, I show my supervise, she see, I'm going to school, I learn. I don't go to school just to take time and [inaudible] about the things I'm supposed to learn. So, I think my supervise feel happy to support me to come to the class because she is going to say, "Oh, you take advantage with the school." And it's helpful to me, I think, to

> my supervise too because before I know I have experience for the job, but I don't have experience to explain exactly the things I do. Sometime you must provide [inaudible] on a meeting. So I have to tell my supervisor everything, how the things going. **So now I don't have problem. If I don't see she before the meeting, she don't mind because she know what I going to say exactly the things going on.** So that's why it's very helpful. (PI #2, p. 15-16)

Paulo pointed to the ways in which learning in the program classes was helping him *and his supervisor* at work. In his view, his improved communication skills enabled him to work more independently; he reported being able to effectively communicate his ideas without assistance from others. It was important to him to demonstrate to his supervisor that he was not "wasting time" while he was away from work (i.e., he *was learning*). Also, it seemed he had an internally generated value for using his class time—time away from work—productively. Paulo now had a larger perspective on his supervisor's perspective (though it was unclear how much the supervisor's perspective influenced his thinking); he shared, "I think my supervisor feels happy to support me."

Like other learners with this way of knowing, Paulo had an understanding of what was happening at work and in meetings, and he had self-determined solutions that were initially hard for him to offer because of his expressive English skills. In the beginning of the program, Paulo talked about wanting to share his knowledge and ideas with fellow workers. However, he reported he did not always have the language skills necessary to communicate his ideas (as though they were trapped inside of him). In the second interview, Paulo noticed an important change in himself. He distinguished between two kinds of experience: the experience of doing a job and the experience of explaining (in English) things as part of his job. In the third interview, Paulo elaborated on how he understood this distinction and how things had changed for him at work because of his improved communication skills. "Before I know everything about the job I do, but I don't know say nothing because I don't know how I say it, the words." With his improved ability to express himself in English, he was able to "say everything I want to say" (he saw himself as having an internal source of knowledge).

> But before I know everything about the job I do, but I don't say nothing because I don't know how I say it, the words. [I] feel a little shy I don't say things. Maybe I don't want to say that because maybe I say it wrong. **But now I don't feel like that. So, I go to the meeting. I say everything I want to say. And since the programs, I have two promotion**. I wait for another one maybe for the end of this month or the beginning (March). Because I do different kind of job, so I do [three different kinds of] jobs now. I work on a machine. I do very specifically inspection on materials. I work on elimination machine. Elimination machine. Make windows for [plane]. (PI #3, p. 2)

Similarly, Paulo felt his writing skills had improved, and he discussed how this was helpful at work. Before the program, he could see defects in products but was not always able to write what he saw, and he did not know whether what he wrote accurately conveyed what he wanted to say. In the third interview, Paulo reflected on the change he noticed in himself and his ability to do his work.

> Before I work on a very interesting machine to inspect some sheet for some glass. . . . But I don't know how I write my paperwork when I find a defect in a material, or I don't know how I, that good I explained on a paper. **So now, I can explain**

> **anything on a paper, write myself. . . . Before, I have a lot of things to say on a meeting, but I can't say nothing because I feel shy to say something if I say it wrong.** (PI #3, p. 1)

The distinction between what Paulo knew and saw and what he was able to explain in English is implicit. We see that Paulo reflected on his job qualifications, demonstrated and actual abilities, and the changes he noticed in his work.

But in the last interview, Paulo talked about a change: he was now able to contribute his ideas in work meetings. At this time, we noted an important change in Paulo's way of knowing—he now demonstrated both a full Self-Authoring and a Socializing way of knowing operating alongside each other. Paulo spoke about his new way of contributing at work:

> Exactly the same thing happened to me. So one day I'll have a meeting with my supervisor to plan, to manage. So it was before, when I go to that meeting, I have lot to say, but I can't say nothing. I say just one thing, so I be quiet until finish. But now, I have good ideas. **I try to change a lot of things, like to change the, how we do the work, so, in my area,** I have a lot of other people, so I'm better at meeting. That's very important.

Paulo's improved communication skills changed the way he was able to express his thinking in meetings at work. He also noted how this helped him take greater initiative in making improvements at work—and this was satisfying to him. Not only did Paulo feel a greater sense of confidence and competence in his work at Polaroid, he also reported that the way he felt about himself positively influenced other areas of his life. Greater reading and English communication proficiencies gave him access to information and knowledge about many things (e.g., colleges, home buying, mortgages, community involvement). He felt he needed to understand various sources of information to weigh them and make his own decisions. During the last interview, he recalled what it was like before the program, when his English language and communication skills were not well developed.

> When you have to go someplace, you look all day for somebody go with you. So nobody can have a chance to go with you because work. So you feel . . . kind mad. "Why I don't understand for myself." Say when go to the meeting on the school, they say something's maybe good for your children, but you don't know if it's good or not.

Paulo also spoke about how his improved communication skills changed the way he was able to support his family. He was now better able to understand and communicate with others (e.g., parents and school officials) when he attended meetings at his daughters' schools—thereby highlighting how learning in the program not only helped him in his role as a worker, but also in his role as parent.

> This is very, very proud. . . . I go some kind meeting at school for my kids. . . . [Before I] go because I have to do, but I don't understand nothing, you know, I feel like I have a lot to say but I don't. I don't say nothing because, I don't. I'd be afraid to say something if I said it wrong. **But now,** I go to the meeting, and I understand the meeting. . . . This why I think this is very important. Learn.

Education, in Paulo's view, made it possible for him to make more informed decisions for himself and for his family. Paulo's experience points to the ways in which knowledge and education were empowering—they enabled him to make better decisions and gave him more control over his life. He spoke specifically about how his knowledge helped in his role as a parent.

> To help my kids, because I have daughter who is [in her early 20s] years old, she's gone to college for two years. And I have another one is [a late teen], she's on college for one years. . . . So, since I started this program I change . . . both their college, for the better one. . . . Because one is supposed to pay $15,000, and I see one is better, better, better. **And just for $3,000 more, I say the $3,000 more, so I had this promotion is another $2,000, so I can pay for my daughter for better college.** . . . All the time, I have good conversation with my daughters. So, they good girls. So, at least to me [inaudible] the cost is [inaudible] good, so that's the things that make me feel stronger, and buy my house, also. Because if you have your house, your kids will be free.

Paulo was able to decide to change the colleges that his daughters were attending because he had greater access to important information and a deeper understanding of that information, which then enabled him to weigh the information when making a decision. Additionally, his recent promotions at work, he said, provided him with greater financial resources to support his choices.

At the end of the program, Paulo reflected on the *process* of learning. It was important to him that he made his own decisions (he also said that he did not automatically trust someone else's decision-making). Paulo reflected on how he understood the value of education, and how it helped him with his decision-making.

> Just those kinds of **decisions I make**. But, whatever, if I work two jobs, I'd have money in the bank, but I don't know how I'd spend my money. **But when you have education, you start understand, so you can decide what you're supposed to do.** [*And you can have the information so you can make the decisions.*] Sure, if I have the information to make the decisions.

Access to information gave him what he felt he needed to make more informed decisions (demonstrating a Self-Authoring way of knowing). Education also helped him understand how to use money more thoughtfully and better support his family. Paulo appreciated the larger context of using money in an informed way. It was important to him to have knowledge and information to make *his own decisions* about how to manage his money and life. Being better able to understand different sources of information and use them to inform his decision-making changed the way he enacted his roles as worker and parent. This, in Paulo's view, helped him "feel strong" and also helped him work toward his larger, more abstract goal of helping his children "be free" by supporting their educational journeys.

In this section, we have illuminated how learning in the CEI program helped these learners develop greater skills and enhanced competencies at work and, in some cases, as parents. We showed how learners made sense of these changes through the lens of their individual meaning systems. Learning in this program *changed* the way they were able to enact their roles as workers. All learners reported greater self-confidence, improved efficiency in their work, and better communication skills. We have illustrated how learners across ways of knowing made sense of these changes and how, in many cases, learners changed the way they understood their roles as workers.

Learners in this sample who were Instrumental knowers focused on how developing new skills or improving their skills helped them demonstrate new behaviors at work. Learning in the program and earning a diploma would make them more eligible for better jobs or promotions (i.e., there was a cause and effect relationship). Socializing knowers, in particular, oriented to the ways in which their enhanced skills and competencies helped them to work more effectively and also focused on how their improved communication skills helped them understand other people (e.g., supervisors and coworkers) and express themselves better. As Socializing knowers are identified with other people's perceptions of them, being better able to express themselves was critical to them in their workplace and their lives. While Self-Authoring knowers valued their improved skills and competencies, they appreciated these as aiding their larger learning purposes. Program learning helped them have greater access to information needed to make their own decisions, which, in turn, helped them achieve larger, self-determined goals. Learning in the program made them "feel strong."

The CEI program design and curriculum explicitly and deliberately connected program learning and workplace needs (see Chapter Six for a description of the CEI program design and curriculum). The curriculum itself—and its emphasis on what CEI refers to as "pervasive standards" (i.e., communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, presentation skills, and computer competencies)—the design of the program (e.g., the cohort model and program classes taking place during work days), and teacher practices (e.g., employing collaborative learning) helped learners develop skills and competencies needed in the workplace.

Earlier in this chapter, we presented Polaroid's competency development "Star Model," which consists of five components and core skill sets (see Table 1). One component of this model is "Team Participation;" another is "High Performance Workstyle." Many CEI program features seemed to support development of these workplace competencies. For example, in all program classes, learners worked in collaborative groups—comparable to working in teams on the shop floor—in which group members taught one another while developing problem solving-skills and providing feedback on their work. These skills and competencies correspond with skill sets articulated by the Polaroid competency model (under "Team Participation"). As we have shown, many learners reported being better able to actively engage with their teams, a competency they attributed to learning in the program. All learners reported feeling greater confidence in their ability to do their jobs. And learners across ways of knowing reported program learning helped them do their work "more efficiently" and "faster." These are skills listed under "High Performance Workstyle" in Polaroid's competency model. Bridging ABE program curriculum with the curriculum of the 21st century workplace, we suggest, will help workers develop the skills and competencies they need to manage the multiple demands of modern-day work. We will explore this in detail in the next section.

SECTION V: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

> Although most education is not consciously and explicitly directed toward psychological development, the process of education itself implies growth and development. Also, there is a considerable investment of the self in education. Even in highly technical or skills-based courses, the learner is concerned with questions that impact the self. (Tennant & Pogson, 1995, p. 191)

In this chapter, we presented some of the ways in which learners in this program experienced the process of education as affecting their selves. We focused on changes in: skills, knowledge, self-confidence, relationships, and ways of knowing. We did this by examining the powerful ways that learning in this program helped these learners generate new goals; new skills and competencies; and, in some cases, new understandings of themselves and their work. Our hope was to illuminate how a developmental perspective can be a tool for better understanding how adult learners make sense of important aspects of their program experiences and how their learning influenced them as learners, workers, and in some cases, as parents. In so doing, we illustrate the *motion of change* in these adults' lives and broaden conceptions about supporting their educational processes.

Kegan (1982) explains the inherent value of employing a developmental framework in this way:

> The heart of a constructive-developmental framework—and the source of its potential for growth—does not lie so much in its account of the stages or sequences of meaning organizations, but in its capacity to illuminate a universal ongoing process (call it "meaning-making," "adaptation," "equilibration," or "evolution") which may very well be the fundamental context of personality development. (p. 264)

Kegan helps us understand the universal and ongoing process in which we all engage—meaning making, "a kind of species sympathy which we do not share as much as it shares us" (1982, p. 19). Understanding how a person is making sense of her world creates an opportunity to join her and offer support *in a way* that she will experience as supportive. We showed how these learners made sense of their improved skills and competencies—and often their new sense of personal and professional empowerment—through their individual meaning systems. We also illustrated how learners' conceptions of their goals, relationships with their teachers, and relationship to work changed during the 14-month period of this CEI Adult Diploma Program. Put simply, we have shown how learning in this program made a difference in learners' lives.

Our findings teach us that the cohort and this program—its teachers, tutors, curricula, and programmatic structures—served as consistent and enduring sources of support and challenge as these adults made their learning journey while balancing the demands of their roles as learners, workers, and parents. This dynamic, transitional holding environment was robust and spacious enough to support and challenge adults with qualitatively different ways of knowing as they grew and changed. Constructive-developmental theory sheds light on the importance of providing developmentally appropriate supports and challenges to learners' with a diversity of ways of knowing, and it helps us consider how to enhance classroom conditions to better facilitate adult learning. In this section, we will suggest some general and specific implications of our work for teacher practice, curriculum development, and program design that hold the potential to better support a wide range of learners in ABE/ESOL settings.

First, we examined learners' motives, goals, and future aspirations for learning while pointing to the different ways that learners across ways of knowing made sense of these purposes. Much like Valentine (1990), we discovered that learners articulated a range of motives for enrolling in this program, as well as a variety of goals for their learning; however, they made sense of these in *developmentally different ways*. Our work also explored how learners' goals and aspirations changed during the program—moving toward bigger goals and visions for their futures—and we highlighted how learners' ways of knowing, in many cases, changed. At the end this program, all learners voiced a desire to continue learning—though the contexts in which they talked about pursuing this goal varied. Given that learners can and often do expand their goals and aspirations while participating in ABE programs, how can we better support adults as they reach for new goals and expand their own sense of possibility?

We suggest employing a *plurality of approaches* in supporting learners as they work to achieve goals and encouraging them to contemplate alternative and perhaps more challenging goals. Realizing that learners' goals change over time—and the way in which learners understand their goals may change over time—has implications for curriculum development and teacher practice. As teachers, we can create classroom structures that will support learners as they develop the skills needed to create, articulate, and reflect on their own goals. As we have illuminated, it is also critical to understand that learners with different ways of knowing need developmentally appropriate forms of support and challenge as they engage in this process. We must meet learners *where they are* and provide appropriate scaffolding as they engage in goal-setting. This, in our view, constitutes a new kind of *learner-centeredness*—one that calls for attention to how learners with different ways of knowing experience and need different forms of support and challenge.

For example, developing curricula and creating classroom conditions in which adults are periodically invited to reflect on their learning, personal, and role specific goals (e.g., work goals and parenting goals) could support learners with different needs. This practice would create opportunities for adults to envision and reflect on concrete steps needed to achieve their goals. Learners might also be encouraged to formulate new (more abstract) goals after participating in this process. Teachers could also create forums in which learners could work (both independently and in groups) with teacher and peer support to outline steps for achieving goals.

This kind of curriculum for goal exploration, like the Life Stories exercise discussed in Chapter Six, would support and challenge learners with a wide range of needs. It would include both oral and written exercises (e.g., structured with guiding questions related to goals) that could be integrated into existing program classes. As discussed, learners with different ways of knowing need appropriate forms of support and challenge from both teachers and peers to benefit fully from this process. For example, while Instrumental knowers could benefit from supportive challenges that encourage consideration of more abstract goals, Socializing knowers, who look to their teachers for validation when setting goals, would benefit from encouragement to view themselves as able to author their own learning and life goals. Learning how to access the information they need in order to pursue self-generated goals might best support Self-Authoring knowers. We will share one possibility for how this curriculum for goal exploration could be woven into the fabric of ABE classrooms.

At the start of such a program, teachers invite learners to work independently by writing about goals in response to structured questions. Next, learners have an opportunity to share whatever goals they felt comfortable sharing with teachers and members of their group. As discussed in Chapter Six, collaborative group work offers both support and challenge to learners who make sense of their experience across a variety of ways of knowing. In this case, collaborative group work creates a context within which learners share goals, reflect on fellow group members' goals and questions (i.e., an opportunity for clarification of goals and possibly to broaden perspectives), and help each other develop concrete steps to be taken toward accomplishing goals. Teachers could also create forums (toward the end of the semesters) where learners are invited not only to revisit and assess their goals, but also to check in with teachers and peers, and also reflect independently by writing about their goals. Building curricula like this into program design and classroom practice holds the potential to better support and challenge the range of learners likely to populate ABE classrooms and to meet learners—wherever they are—as they strive to meet their goals. Such practices also hold the potential to enhance classroom community, which might help learners persist.

How might developing a better understanding of learners' expectations of their teacher—and the criteria they use to assess good teachers—inform teacher practice? In this chapter, we explored how learners with different ways of knowing understood the teacher–learner relationship and what it means to be a good teacher. We highlighted how learners' conceptions were not fixed but changed during the program. The CEI program teachers seemed to enact their role in a way that provided multiple forms of support to learners, so the challenges of being "an adult" in school and managing the demands of this role in addition to others were not overwhelming. Not only were CEI teachers able to do this effectively, but learners appreciated their teachers who *understood* they were "adults going back to school." Some learners said they valued how their teachers made learning fun or interesting. Most talked about the importance of having teachers who cared about them as people or who were "there for" them.

One of our initial questions concerned how a learner's native culture, especially with respect to how teachers may be regarded, might influence what a learner was willing and able to share. In that section, we presented examples of how learners from the same home country and with similar educational experiences made sense of their relationships with teachers and understood what it means to be a good teacher. We have shown that a person's home country culture is a powerful influence in shaping expectations. And we presented cases that illustrated how two people can come from the *same* home country, live with similar expectations, and have similar prior educational background, yet demonstrate different ways of knowing. These examples illustrate that while culture strongly influences experience, *it is not the single "ruling" variable* shaping how a person understands an experience. We have also highlighted how it is *through the lens of a person's underlying meaning system* that he understands experiences of his teachers.

Bill and Jeff, for instance, were born and raised in the U.S. and dropped out before completing high school. Neither had histories of positive learning experiences. In fact, both had trouble recalling any positive experiences in past formal learning. However, despite sharing the same home country culture and similar prior educational experiences, each held different expectations for their program teachers and experienced the teacher–learner relationship *differently* in this program. Culture and personal educational histories are not the only variables that shaped their understanding of what makes for a good teacher. Their conceptions are significantly shaped by their ways of knowing, as we have demonstrated. Because of this, each needs different forms of supports and challenges from classroom teachers.

Recall that, as an Instrumental knower, Bill thought good teachers were those who told him *"exactly"* what he needed to do to get the right answer. To learn Bill felt that he needed to follow the teachers' rules to get a good grade (i.e., a cause and effect relationship). Jeff, a Self-Authoring knower, viewed good teachers as those helping him access information needed to make his own good decisions and achieve his self-determined goals. While Jeff saw the teacher as *one* source of knowledge, he viewed himself and his classmates as other sources.

Similarly, Christopher and Pierre share the same home country in the Caribbean and have lived in the U.S. for close to the same amount of time. Yet, as we have shown, they have different ideas about what it takes to be a good teacher, and they think about the responsibilities of the teacher and learner in qualitatively different ways. As a Socializing knower, Pierre looked to his teacher for validation and acceptance. While he could *feel* (internally) when he had learned something, he needed his teacher to acknowledge his learning. Pierre oriented to the relational qualities of the teacher–learner relationship (e.g., good teachers "show they care"). Christopher, a Socializing/Self-Authoring knower, respected and appreciated teachers who supported his learning. However, unlike Pierre, Christopher had internally generated criteria for assessing his teachers' instructional practice and for deciding whether his own questions were "good." Christopher felt best supported in learning when teachers helped him meet his own learning goals. As we have shown, learners' ways of knowing importantly shape their understanding of the teacher-learner relationship.

Finally, all of the other learners who completed this program, except Toungh (who is from an Asian country) and Hope (who was from a different home country in the Caribbean than Pierre and Christopher) share the same home country in West Africa. Our exploration has shown that while learners shared some common cultural ideas about their own home country and its educational system, they discussed subtle differences in how they experienced these. By carefully examining both the *content* and the *shape* of learners' thinking about their relationships with their teachers and the expectations they held of teachers, we not only illuminated commonalities and differences in how learners who shared a particular way of knowing experienced their relationships with teachers, but we also illustrated how their conceptions changed over time. Realizing that learners have a range of expectations for how teachers can support their learning—and that learners make sense of these in different ways—can inform teaching practice and classroom design. To create optimal holding environments for learning, different types of support and challenges are needed—within any *one* classroom. Listening closely to learners' expectations for their teachers can help us understand their experience and better support them in what Kegan refers to as "the universal process" of making meaning (p. 264).

As we have illustrated, Instrumental knowers construct knowledge as an accumulation of facts. These knowers "get" knowledge from their teachers, which helps them to get right answers. Concrete supports and rewards support these knowers in their learning. Socializing knowers expect their teachers to *know* what is good to know. They feel best supported when their teachers care about them. Challenging or criticizing a teacher is experienced as a threat to the self for learners with this way of knowing, so challenge would take the form of encouraging them to voice their thinking in the classroom. By supportively challenging Socializing knowers in this way, they may grow over time to have greater self-authorship in presenting their own ideas and opinions.

Self-Authoring knowers value teachers who can help them to meet their own internally generated goals. These knowers evaluate teachers' suggestions for improvement and will offer their own feedback and suggestions, so teachers can improve pedagogical practices. Self-Authoring knowers understand the educational process as providing greater access to different sources of information so that they, in turn, can achieve their goals. Rather than looking to an external authority for approval or agreement in deciding what to do, these learners made their own decisions. Providing opportunities for self-guided learning and decision-making while connecting classroom learning with self-identified goals would support and challenge Self-Authoring learners.

Lastly, we explored how these participants experienced program learning as making a difference in their ability to perform their work and enact their role as workers. We examined how learners understood the skills and competencies they developed in this program as helping them better meet and manage the complex demands of 21st century work life, which calls for new skill sets (Comings et al., 2000; Murnane & Levy, 1996; Stein, 2000). Not only did program learning support the development of learners' skills and competencies, but also in many cases, learners grew to have a new relationship to their work.

Learners across ways of knowing reported feeling better able to manage the complexities of their work. The skills and competencies they named as improved align with the demands of 21st century workplaces (see e.g., Comings et al., 2000; Murnane & Levy, 1996; Purcell-Gates, 1995). Specifically, learners said they had

- Improved communication skills
- Improved writing skills
- Greater productivity
- Increased self-confidence (generally, and in delivering oral presentations)
- Greater appreciation for and ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds
- Enhanced ability to use personal computers and the Internet
- Greater reading comprehension
- Sharpened/expanded mathematical skills

Learners reported these skills and competencies helped them become better team members, more effective communicators, and more efficient at work. Significantly, all learners expressed a desire to continue learning after program completion. It appears that learning in this program not only supported learners as they developed and enhanced skills and competencies needed for work, but also stimulated an appetite—a craving—to continue learning within structured programs. Curricula that focus on personal and professional development as well as skill development create important and meaningful desires for more learning.

Because adult learners understand skill and competency development in developmentally different ways, it is critical that we shape ABE curricula in ways that recognize this developmental diversity and so link them to learners' lives as workers. Realizing that learners construct their roles as workers, relationships with supervisors and coworkers, and skill development in qualitatively different ways has important implications for program curricula and how we understand competency and skill mastery in the workplace.

Like our colleagues at EFF, we think about competency development as a developmental continuum. We hope our work sheds light on how a developmental perspective helps broaden understanding of competence and competency development (we present our developmental conception of competency in the next chapter). Infusing ABE curricula with linkages to learners' workplaces and real-life experience (personal and professional) can support and challenge a range of learners with different ways of knowing and help them transfer learning.

Rossiter (1999) recommends that instructors invite learners to write their autobiographies as a way to support and promote development.

> The idea is that the process of telling one's story externalizes it so that one can reflect on it, become aware of its trajectory and the themes within it, and make choices about how one wishes to continue. Thus, learning activities in which learners are encouraged to draw autobiographical connections, to work with their own stories, and to reflect on alternative plots for their lives are key to education that is responsive to individual developmental trajectories. (pp. 68-69)

To support development, Rossiter (1999) maintains that an instructor must be "intrusive" (p. 58) in learners' lives. Rather than framing this type of interaction as intruding on learners and their lives, however, we see it as helpful to better understanding how to support *and* challenge learners in ways that will feel supportive to their development. CEI program teachers did not appear "intrusive," nor did they "dislodge" learners in ways that Rossiter seems to recommend (p. 58), yet these teachers were able to effectively support learners who had qualitatively different underlying meaning systems.

While educators may not assign autobiographies to students, it is developmentally helpful when instructors can relate assignments to learners' life experiences. For example, in addition to building curricula that helps learners develop skills, we previously suggested the importance of creating curricula aimed at supporting learners as they develop goal-setting skills and begin to reflect on their goals. Additionally, linking ABE curricula to learners' work and personal lives can support learners. These curricula need to be accompanied by appropriate scaffolding and support to meet a range of learners' needs. Instrumental knowers, for example, would likely find a skill-oriented curriculum better suited to their needs and would require different forms of support to engage with this process. Socializing and Self-Authoring knowers, who think abstractly about their experiences, would need other forms of support and challenge that we mentioned earlier, when given opportunities to reflect on the relationship between program learning and work lives.

Reflective exercises similar in nature to the exercises CEI teachers assigned, would help scaffold and support learners in their thinking (e.g., the Life Stories exercise, and conducting research independently and in collaborative groups with support from the teachers—as was discussed in the Chapter Six). Other exercises (written and oral) that encourage learners to reflect on applying skills learned in class to real-life situations can also support learners' development (e.g., creating opportunities to apply math principles to help learners figure out financing for home buying, mortgages, etc.). These exercises would support and challenge learners as they unearth their assumptions, achieve a new relationship to their thinking, see new possibilities, and develop new aspirations. Creating opportunities in which learners are invited to share these exercises with teachers and classmates can not only support development of classroom community, but also help learners consider alternative ways of thinking.

We suggest that educators need multiple ways to attend to learners' needs and a variety of curricula that help learners reflect on their learning by connecting it with their work and lives outside the workplace. Employing practices that support this kind of self-reflection can be developmentally helpful in two ways. First, a space is made for learners to reflect on their lives and develop a new relationship to their own thinking and assumptions. Second, educators learn how to better support and challenge learners in becoming more empowered workers who can meet the demands of the 21st century workplace. Creating these opportunities could enhance possibilities for them as learners and workers and for us as educators.

In concluding this chapter, we revisit one notable finding. In addition to important and life-enhancing skill changes reported by learners, we find it remarkable, given the relatively short duration of this program, that fully one half of these cohort learners demonstrated a qualitative change in their underlying meaning system from program start to finish. Table 6 summarizes the changes we observed in learners' ways of knowing and the number of participants who demonstrated each type of structural change.

Table 6: Changes in Learners' Underlying Meaning System from Program Start to Finish

Way of Knowing	Number of Learners With This Way of Knowing at Program Start	Type of Change in Way of Knowing From Program Start to End	Number of Learners Who Demonstrated This Type of Change at Program's End
Instrumental Knowers (i.e., 2)	2	2➔2(3)	2

Instrumental/Socializing Knowers (i.e., 2/3 or 3/2)	7	2/3➡3/2 or 3/2➡3	3
Socializing Knowers (i.e., 3)	2	3➡3(4)	0
Socializing/Self-Authoring Knowers (i.e., 3/4 or 4/3)	4	3/4➡4/3	3
Self-Authoring Knowers (i.e., 4)	1	4➡4(5)	0

In Chapter Six, we illuminated some of the ways in which this program—and its features and conditions—created a dynamic and robust holding environment that was roomy enough to support and challenge learners with different ways of knowing.

We agree with Rossiter (1999) about the importance of balancing challenges with enough support to keep learners from dropping out of these programs; however, we suggest that the *forms* of support and challenge that facilitate learning need to be developmentally appropriate for learners. This does not mean, as Tinberg and Weisberger (1997) seem to contend, that it is necessary to create multiple lesson plans to attend to learners' needs. Instead, we recommend incorporating multiple and developmentally appropriate forms of support and challenge in teacher practice, curricular design, and ABE classrooms. Development and change, as demonstrated in this group of learners, occurred by meeting learners where they were and by carefully scaffolding them with a variety of forms of support and challenge (e.g., concrete and relational supports as well as access to information and opportunities for self-reflection). Cohort relationships, collaborative learning, teacher–learner relationships, curricula, pedagogical practices, and program structure seemed to work synergistically to support and challenge these adult learners across a wide range of ways of knowing. This dynamic and multifaceted holding environment held learners as they developed greater capacities to manage the challenges and complexities of their lives.

We hope this detailed exploration helps us *listen differently* to learners' voices. We also hope this work enables us to better understand learners' experience in ABE/ESOL programs and move closer to creating optimal learning environments in which adult learners with a range of needs and ways of knowing can grow to experience greater personal empowerment and job enhancement. For it is within these holding environments that we accompany adult learners by offering forms of support *and* challenge that ease and enrich their journeys for growth.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Competence as a Developmental Process

BY:
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INTRODUCTION

Demonstrating competence and mastery is endemic to the human spirit, and as their voices have clearly spoken in the previous chapters, the participants in our study, individually and collectively, have an indomitable spirit. They almost cannot help demonstrate their newfound confidence, competence, and pride in themselves as they talk about the things they have learned and that have mattered to them in their respective programs. Despite the obstacles and hardships, many of them speak with a great sense of accomplishment about how much better they can participate in their classes, teach their children, and perform in their jobs. We would be hard-pressed to find anyone among them who did not feel in some way bigger for their participation in their learning program. Some experienced more of a gain than others, but as their voices tell us, none were unchanged by their experience.

Gaining a sense of mastery and competence over previously challenging and difficult tasks (psychological, emotional, cognitive, as well as physical) inevitably brings with it a tremendous sense of personal triumph. It is a wonderful and inspiring thing to see such triumph, yet educators, researchers, and program funders are also asking the question, How do we assess that triumph? How do we acknowledge and measure the success of the individual learners and of the programs? How do we measure the competence we see these learners demonstrate?

There are as many ways of demonstrating competence and triumph as there are triumphs themselves. And, we will argue, there are as many *ways of being competent*. In this chapter we will look at the many forms competence takes, the variety of ways in which people make sense of and demonstrate their competence, and, most importantly, the variety of ways that people are *differently competent*. Specifically, we aim to suggest and illustrate an expanded, pluralistic view of competence in adult literacy to take into account the ways in which adults have different capacities and capabilities. To that end, we will highlight the current thinking on skills and competence in the adult literacy field and situate ourselves within that thinking. We will also look at the ways in which the participants in our study talked about and demonstrated skills and competencies specific to their role as student, parent, or worker. With all that in hand, we will discuss the implications and possible applications of our perspective and understanding for the wider issue of adult literacy competence.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COMPETENCE

While many educators seem to have increasing skill and competence as a primary goal, the definition of skill and competence is actively debated in the field of adult literacy. The terms "skill," "competence," and "performance standards" are used in so many ways in the field that it seems we are not always talking about the same concepts (Green, 1995). The issue of competence itself and the establishment of standards in the field of adult literacy speak to the need to understand and measure individual students' progress and programs' success. However, there is little agreement on what constitutes progress and success, even as there is widespread agreement that adults' fuller participation in society is a desirable end result.

> Competency standards are propelled by a strong political impetus as the way to prepare the work force for the competitive global economy. At the same time, a growing chorus of critics argues that the approach [to competency standards] is conceptually confused, empirically flawed, and inadequate for the needs of a learning society. (Chappell, 1996; Ecclestone, 1997; Hyland, 1994 as cited in Kerka, 1998, p. 1)

At one end of the spectrum in this debate over the approach to standards and competence are those who focus primarily on the acquisition of concrete, specific and measurable basic skills. This view is driven by and structured around traditional academic disciplines, with a specific and measurable knowledge base as the goal. At the other end of the spectrum are those who view competence and performance standards as naturally and necessarily evolving from the context of individuals' lives, subordinating the acquisition of basic skills and their application to the immediate context of what adults need to be able to do to manage the demands and complexities of daily life.

Although much of the debate over the definition and measurement of competence in adult education has taken place in Britain and Australia, issues of basic skills and minimum competencies in adult education have increasingly drawn attention in the United States since the 1970s, as most states have mandated their assessment of students (Kerka, 1998). Also referred to as standards-based reform, this debate is concerned with both curricular content and student performance. It involves two issues: what will be taught and how knowledge and performance will be measured (Green, 1995).

The basic skills end of the spectrum of adult education has been significantly influenced by the K-12 educational reform in the 1990s. This reform has been dominated by the development of content standards for the K-12 curriculum which make the knowledge and skills all students should master explicit (Woodward, 1999). The purpose of this reform is to use "challenging academic expectations to drive instruction, curriculum, assessment, teacher education, professional development, textbook adoption, allocation of resources, and accountability" (Woodward, p. 11, 1999). The content standards for K–12 describe, from the perspective of an ideal curriculum, what students are expected to learn or achieve rather than which pedagogical approach teachers should use. For example, the subject standards for grades 9–12 in physical science include the "structure of atoms, the structure and properties of matter, chemical reactions, motions and forces, conservation of energy and increase in disorder and interactions of energy and matter" (NRC, 1996 pp. 176-190 as cited in Munroe, p. 145). These kinds of content standards are very specific and explicit and clearly reflect a goal of providing a specific knowledge base for the K–12 students.

As a result of this influence of the K-12 standards-based reform, a process is currently underway to revise the GED Test and align national and state standards for it, allowing "GED candidates the opportunity to demonstrate achievement comparable to that of high school graduates" (Woodward, 1999, p. 4). Similarly, Massachusetts, for example, has developed an ABE curriculum framework intended to provide "continuity and consensus about what skills and content matter most" (Hassett, 2000, p. 6). The national debate, then, over curricular standards for both K-12 and adult education focuses on what students should know in specific content areas, such as which algebraic equations a student should be able to perform.

Addressing the issue of competence, the proponents of the basic skills perspective have developed performance standards to assess students' level of content mastery. These standards describe the "type of task that would allow evaluators to measure the level of performance and provide samples of student work that exemplify appropriate performance" (Woodward, 1999, p. 23). These indicators of performance are used to determine a student's level of proficiency and target areas for improvement (Hassett, 2000). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) frameworks provide an example of performance standards that are cross-classified by subject knowledge and levels of understanding. For example, the NAEP Reading Proficiency levels are scaled, centered on 250 points and with a range from 0 to 500 points:

350	Can synthesize and learn from specialized reading materials
300	Can find, understand, summarize, and explain relatively complicated information
250	Can search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations
200	Can comprehend specific or sequentially related material
150	Can carry out simple, discrete reading tasks

(Green, 1995, p. 18)

This reading proficiency scale reflects the acknowledgment of different levels of skill while keeping the task specific and the goal clearly identified. Frameworks such as these view competence as

> the performance of discrete tasks, identified by functional analysis of work roles. This analysis is the basis for competency statements or standards upon which competence is assessed and toward achievement of which CBET [competency-based education and training] is directed. (Kerka, 1998, p. 3)

For many educators, "basic skills do not differ from standardized achievement skills, or the academic competencies associated with literacy and numeracy" (Smith and Marsiske, 1994). From this perspective, students' progress in a literacy program, i.e., their competence, would be evaluated by standardized reading tests, such as the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE), the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE–Reading subtest), or the Degree of Reading Power Test (DRP) (Fingeret & Drennon, 1997). At this end of the spectrum, then, the focus seems to be on teaching and measuring the skills and content identified by traditional educational values and norms.

The debate at the opposite end of the spectrum surrounds the tension between developing standardized national core curricula and grounding the relevance of skills and competencies in the needs and expectations of individual learners' lives. Hodkinson and Isset (1995) argue that

> competence is not and cannot be a fixed concept. . . . We need to recognize that in order to be competent we must constantly review and change our practice and that practice is partially determined by the unequal society in which we live and…which we sometimes need to challenge and seek to change. (p. 148)

At this end of the spectrum, competence and basic skills are viewed as individualized practices, grounded in social and political contexts (Demetrion, 1999). This perspective on competence focuses on life skills and other abilities necessary for learners to not only function in a complex world but to develop the ability to assess and act upon the unique situations in which they find themselves. As Fingeret & Drennon (1997) describe, literacy involves more than basic skills.

> Viewing literacy as skills or tasks does not adequately encompass the complexity of the experience of literacy in adults' daily lives. Literacy reflects the fundamental interdependence of the social world at many levels. . . . Although literacy requires knowledge of the technical skills of forming letters, spelling words decoding, and so on, these technical skills are useless without social knowledge that attaches meaning to words *in context*. (emphasis in original, p. 62)

From this perspective, adult literacy learning integrates practical competency with self-knowledge and is situated in learners' broadened understanding of themselves, culture and society (Demetrion, 1999). As such, they recommend "authentic assessment" that involves "reflection on and analysis of a sample of artifacts from literary practices drawn from many domains in students' lives," such as portfolio assessment (Fingeret & Drennon, 1997, p. 100). The measurement of competence comes more from the relevant and appropriate use of knowledge than from the content and quantity of the knowledge itself. As a result, competence becomes more of a process of gaining entry into a wider and wider arena of the various contexts of an individual's life: being better able to advocate for oneself in job interviews, being better able to talk with the teacher of one's child to discuss and understand how the child is doing in school, perhaps to advocate for the child to get better health or educational services if needed.

> [This] approach to competence is variously termed integrated, holistic, or relational. An integrated view sees competence as a complex combination of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and values displayed in the context of task performance (Gonczi, 1997; Hager, 1995). This approach recognizes levels of competence—entry/novice, experienced, specialist—rather than a once for all attainment. Interpreted broadly, competence is not trained behavior but thoughtful capabilities and a developmental process (Barrie and Pace 1997; Chappell, 1996). Rather than a single acceptable outcome, performance may be demonstrable and/or defensible in variable contexts (Chappell, 1996). (as cited in Kerka, 1998, pg. 3)

The figure and ground at this end of the spectrum shift from a focus on specific content and skills to a focus on the adult-in-context and what that adult learner needs to learn and know in order to manage, as Fingeret and Drennon (1997) say, the "complexity of the experience of literacy in [their] daily lives" (p.62).

As these views demonstrate, there is little theoretical consensus between the two ends of the spectrum on what to teach, what to call competence, what to measure, or how to measure it (Reynolds & Bezruckzo, 1989). One of the biggest challenges in the field of adult basic education is bridging the gap between the teaching of either basic skills or contextualized life skills and measures of competency (Green, 1995). Another challenge is finding a position in the middle of the spectrum. One initiative, however, stands out as an attempt to bring the worlds of basic skills and the integrated approach to adult literacy together.

Equipped for the Future (EFF) is a national, collaborative, standards-based system reform initiative, which presents a new way to understand and respond to demands for adult literacy in this country. This initiative recognizes that "people make judgments and review, reflect on, and change behavior, continually reconstructing relevant and useful knowledge as they interact with a situation" (Kerka, 1998, pg. 2). EFF's philosophical stance is inclusive, integrated, and based on the real-world needs of the adult learners it seeks to serve. EFF is also concerned about creating measurable standards by which adult learners can assess their own goals and success and by which programs can be accountable to their funders.

One of the many goals of EFF is to "focus the literacy system on producing results that matter to our students, our communities, and our funders" (Portnow, Popp, Broderick, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 1998, p. 25).

> [t]he Equipped for the Future Standards for Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning have been developed to answer a complex question: What do adults need to know and be able to do in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities as workers, parents and family members, and citizens and community members?
> (Stein, 2000, p.1)

A comprehensive survey of adult literacy skills carried out in 1993 by the National Adult Literacy Survey, showed that over 40 percent of all American adults demonstrated skill levels below the benchmark identified by economists Murnane and Levy's (1996) list of New Basic Skills gathered from research in high-performance businesses. The list includes:

- The ability to read at the ninth-grade level or higher.
- The ability to use math at the ninth-grade level or higher.
- The ability to solve semi-structured problems where hypotheses must be formed and tested.
- The ability to work in groups with coworkers from different backgrounds.
- The ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- The ability to use personal computers to carry out simple tasks such as word processing. (p. 3)

While agreeing with the expectation of this set of skills, EFF responds to the issue with a different kind of vision and practice. The EFF team began by going across the country to the adult learners themselves, their teachers, and their tutors and asked what "adults need to know and be able to do in order to carry out their roles as parents and family members, citizens and community members, and workers." From the thousands of responses, EFF distilled a framework of sixteen Standards, not of specific tasks that adults should be able to perform but of the

> core knowledge and skills adults need to effectively carry out their roles as parents, citizens and workers. The Standards have been identified through research on what adults need to do to meet the broad areas of responsibility that define these central adult roles. They do not address the full range of activities adults carry out in these roles; rather, they focus on the knowledge and skills that enable adults to
>
> - gain access to information and ideas;
> - communicate with the confidence that their message makes sense and can be understood by others;
> - make decisions that are based on solid information and reached through thoughtful analysis, consideration of options, and careful judgment;

- keep on learning so they won't be left behind. (Stein, 2000, p.17)

These four points, called the four purposes, are also distilled from the responses the adult learners across the county gave when asked to talk about their purposes for learning. They provide the context and direction for the EFF Standards.

Our project shares EFF's philosophical view in "conceptualizing adult literacy as something bigger than the acquisition of basic skills" (Portnow, Popp, Broderick, Drago-Severson & Kegan, 1998, p. 25) and defining competence within the context of the individual adult learner's life. We take our lead from EFF and agree with its broad view of competence and skill as defined in the "four fundamental categories of skills that adults need to draw from to carry out the key activities that are central to their primary role" (Stein, 2000, p. 17). These four categories organize and contain the 16 EFF Standards and are shown in the chart below (from Stein, 2000, p. 21).

Communication Skills	**Decision-Making Skills**	**Interpersonal Skills**	**Lifelong Learning Skills**
Read With Understanding	Use Math to Solve Problems and Communicate	Cooperate With Others	Take Responsibility for Learning
Convey Ideas in Writing	Solve Problems and Make Decisions	Advocate and Influence	Reflect and Evaluate
Speak So Others Can Understand	Plan	Resolve Conflict and Negotiate	Learn Through Research
Listen Actively		Guide Others	Use Information and Communications Technology
Observe Critically			

We see these Standards as representing the kind of competence that Kerka (1998) describes as "thoughtful capabilities [along with] a developmental process" (p. 3) and as assuming that as adults continue to learn, their competence and mastery continue to deepen, that competence is not an endpoint in itself but a self-perpetuating process. We also recognize and base our work on "the fundamental interdependence of the social world at many levels" (Fingeret & Drennon, 1997, p. 62) in our attempts to highlight the differing competencies demonstrated by the participants in our study. Some of those competencies involve, for example, the kinds of issues parents face in how to set appropriate and consistent limits for and with their child(ren). Although this competence is not explicitly included in the EFF Standards, it would certainly find a place within them as part of what an adult needs to know and be able to do in his or her role as a parent. It could be seen, for example, as one aspect within the "Guide Others" standard.

In the process of refining the Standards, at an EFF Field Development Institute held in February 1998, many of the participating teachers expressed both admiration and dismay at the descriptions of the Standards and their implicit expectations. One teacher remarked, "*I* can't even do some of those things!" The sympathetic laughter in the room belied similar sentiments and even a sense of nervousness at the prospect of assessing not only their students but potentially themselves as well, and seeing too many students—and potentially themselves—fall short of the benchmarks. Our developmental perspective puts us in the unique and fortunate position to be able to address those concerns and to offer a way to understand and assess the competent performance of these Standards so adult learners' differing abilities can be dignified and that *different levels of competence* and *different kinds of competence* can be recognized, celebrated, and built upon. Toward that goal, we have actively collaborated with EFF and its leader Sondra Stein, creating the Developmental Skills Matrices, one for each of the 16 EFF Standards.[1] These matrices suggest ways in which the same skill/standard can be differently understood and enacted by adults who make sense of the world in different ways (see Appendix B). The matrices suggest that competence, or the successful enactment of the standard, can look quite different from one end of the continuum to the other. They also suggest that an appropriate expectation for someone's performance at one level will be a very misguided expectation at another, that our expectations and assessment of competence must be directly linked to an individual's capacities.

EFF takes up defining the continuum of performance as it begins the arduous task of defining performance levels for the Standards.

> These levels will be descriptive, focusing on what adults can do with the knowledge and skills at each level, including what external benchmarks are linked to each level. This approach to setting levels is based on the assumptions that adults differ in the goals they want to achieve at different points in their lives and that different goals require different levels of performance. Once EFF performance levels are set, adults will be able to use them . . . to make informed choices about the level of proficiency they need to develop to achieve goals they set for themselves. (Stein, 2000, p. 19)

In our view, not only do "adults differ in the goals they want to achieve at different points in their lives," but they differ in their capacities as well. Assessment measures must take into account both kinds of differences.

We regard competence as a continuum to be judged and assessed within the context of the individual's own capacity and understanding, and as capabilities that continue to grow and build on themselves. One way to view competence is as the ability to use any given set of tools, whether the tools are spelling skills or psychological insights, in a way appropriate to the context of a person's life and capabilities. People make sense of the world in different ways, with different kinds of capacities, and will understand and use those tools in very different ways. Our job as developmentalists and educators is not to teach or to expect everyone to use the tools in the same way but to use the tools in the most appropriate way relative to their own lives and circumstances. This is not to imply that there are no standards for appropriate and skillful adult behavior and competence—there are. The standards come within a broader spectrum that allows the developmental capacities of each person to be the context for their success and their success to build on itself.

It must be said that our criteria and standards for both identifying and assessing competence are firmly rooted in our Western cultural constructions and perspectives. Talking with so many adult learners from so many different parts of the world, we became acutely aware of how our own standards and values are inevitably and inextricably culturally based and biased. Competence itself is value-laden and cannot be otherwise. Assessments and even recognition of competence are inherently judgmental, even with the gentlest of intentions. As educators, researchers, and consultants, we look at and for the ways adults can now do things better than they did previously. As parents, we may watch our small children gain more and more dexterity every day and thrill at what they are learning to do and becoming competent at, and finding new and bigger challenges to master. It is part of human nature to want to do better, to want others to do better, to be proud to see someone reach for and attain a fuller realization of potential and to keep growing.

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[1] Our set of matrices includes 15 Standards. Since our delivery, EFF has further refined the Standards by adding one and renaming others.

One of the risks of looking at competence, especially in marginalized adult populations, is that we can appear too critically judgmental, as if we are working from a deficit model and focusing on what the adult *cannot* do. However, in our study, we focus our attention on the ways the adult learners *do* accomplish their goals and *do* demonstrate their competence, even as they do this in very different ways from each other and with varying degrees of complexity. We look at the ways adult learners are *differently competent* at the same tasks. In fact, our intention is to follow the natural course of human *being*—to look at and support the process and evolution of continued growth (Kegan, 1982). Much as we watch a tree naturally growing and getting taller and wider, we become concerned if we see its natural course of growth is being held back in some way by (unnecessary) obstacles. We admire it when we see it standing tall, yet if it stands less tall than we know it can become, we are concerned. It is our task to do all we can to understand and provide the kind of environment and space in which it can flourish. It is our intention to follow those same instincts in our attempts to understand and support human growth and evolution.[2]

In earlier chapters, we discussed at length the importance of the holding environment. With respect to supporting and enhancing the learner's competence, the holding environment plays an equally powerful role. The holding environment ultimately holds a bar, if you will, for the level of skill or competence the learner is expected to achieve in that the teacher(s) and the curriculum, whether implicitly or explicitly, have expectations as to the level of performance that is considered successful, and performance is evaluated on that basis. As we have previously argued in other places (Kegan 1994; Popp & Portnow, 1998; Portnow, Popp, Broderick, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 1998) and as we have continued to argue in this monograph, it is important to understand the context of an individual's own life and mind before setting the expectation for the level of performance of certain skills and competencies. As is powerfully argued in Chapter 5, meeting the student where she is can go a long way toward ensuring her continued participation and growth in the program.

Having this broader view of competence in no way diminishes the importance we see of achieving competence in basic skills. We see the basic skills as a platform for attaining a wider form of competence. For example, critical thinking is a form of competence that is very much on the agenda for many teachers (Mezirow, 1991; Brookfield, 1987). In our Western culture, in general, critical thinking is a competence adults are expected to have at their disposal (Kegan 1994). Yet, as our research shows, for many adult learners, critical thinking and the abstraction it requires are currently beyond their capabilities. If many adults are not able to achieve this standard, how do we hold onto our reasonable expectations while acknowledging that they might be too great for some students? Even while we developmentalists take the view that competence must be seen in the context of the individuals' own circumstances, the larger culture still expects adults to demonstrate a certain level of facility. Kegan (1994) examines the expectations and the dangers of a global acceptance when, as the title of his book suggests, many adults are currently "in over their heads" with what is expected of them and what they can actually do, when cultural expectations outpace the actual capacities of adults. When we say, "what they can actually do," we mean not a set of learned behaviors, but the ways in which adults make sense of and enact certain cultural expectations. We mean the competence adults *do* demonstrate. We have seen in the four previous chapters many of the ways the study participants across the three sites talk about their increased sense of confidence, change in perspective, and sense of becoming better students, parents, workers. In each of the voices speaking in the previous chapters, we hear an implicit sense of competence—the accomplishment of something they had previously struggled with and been unable to achieve. We will now turn to an explicit discussion of the ways in which the study participants, through their descriptions of how they would handle various dilemmas, demonstrated their differing competencies.

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[2] One critical issue in the competence debate is language fluency. On one hand, being fluent in the culture's language is a competence in itself, but not being fluent in the culture's language is an obstacle to being able to demonstrate (some of) one's competencies. With the participants in our study, this is a particularly difficult issue because our study was and is very language-based. We asked the participants to explain to us what their experiences were, how they understand those experiences. At the beginning of our study, many of the participants had a very difficult time speaking English with us and explaining their meaning. As their respective programs continued, however, and we continued our conversations with the participants, their language skills noticeably improved for the most part, and the participants acknowledged feeling better able to express themselves. This raises difficult questions about our ability to accurately and fully understand everything the participants told us. At a certain point, it seems impossible to tease apart the competence and the ability to articulate it.

THE VIGNETTES AND COMPETENCE BY ROLE AND SITE

We developed this project to look specifically at issues of learning, transformation, and competence in three primary roles adults take on in their lives: parent, worker, and learner. To illuminate some of the ways that the adult learners in our study demonstrate competence in their respective roles, we posed a hypothetical dilemma containing several problems common to their role and program setting. We then asked them how they would deal with or try to solve the problem if they were the protagonists in the story. Developmentalists (Kohlberg, 1984; Selman, 1980) as a way to tease out a person's reasoning capacities within a particular context have long used vignettes or hypothetical dilemmas. Kohlberg's context is moral reasoning, Selman's is interpersonal perspective-taking, and ours in this study is role-specific problem solving. Although this study was not designed to assess the participants' role competence via their actual performance, we make the assumption that reasoning capacity makes performance possible. We therefore assess competencies inherent in differing reasoning capacities to highlight the ways that adult learners, all along the developmental continuum are *differently competent* at similar role requirements.

In each role-related vignette, we asked the study participants to do several things: consider at least two different dilemmas that are separate problems yet interconnected and mutually influencial; talk to us about how they would handle this overall dilemma, i.e., how they would "solve" the problem; and explain their reasoning for their particular solution. We listen and look for several things: what the participants orient to as the main issue(s) in the dilemma, how they relate to the intertwinedness of the problems, and the complexity of their reasoning in the solution they suggest. From that we can demonstrate—in fact, let the learners themselves demonstrate—the variety of differing skills and competencies they each have and how they might be differently competent from each other with regard to the same issue.

As we expected, each site's data generated a different set of themes of competencies. No one theme carried prominently across all sites, as the issues presented in the vignette and the issues common to each site and role varied considerably. With few exceptions, the themes were raised spontaneously by the participants in their responses. We take this as an indication of the participants' own concerns about the importance of these issues in what they need to be able to do to be effective in their roles as parents, workers and learners. As the reader will see, these themes also echo many of the EFF Standards, such as Guide Others, Cooperate with Others, Resolve Conflict and Negotiate, Solve Problems and Make Decisions, and Take Responsibility for Learning. We present the themes here to illustrate the range of issues adult learners see as important in their roles. We present them also to illustrate the kinds of things that we see as the "thoughtful capabilities" that Kerka (1998) defines competence to be; and the specific kinds of things that adults "need to know and be able to do" (Stein, 2000, p.1) to participate fully in the culture.

We will now turn to the dilemmas by site and highlight some of the competencies that emerged from the responses.

Even Start

The following dilemma was presented to the Even Start participants:

> Daniella and Rita are sisters. Rita is eight and Daniella is six. They are very close but very different. Rita is very smart but very careless and always makes Daniella and other people wait for her. Daniella, on the other hand, is good student, very thoughtful, and always tries to be on time. Every morning Daniella and Rita get ready to go to school together. They eat breakfast together and usually walk to the school bus stop together. Daniella has no trouble getting up in the morning and is always ready when her mother puts breakfast on the table. Rita is exactly the opposite. It's hard for Rita to get out of bed. Rita's mother has to call her five times before she gets out of bed, and Rita almost always arrives at breakfast late. Rita is never ready to leave for school when Daniella is ready and waiting. The same problem comes up every morning—Daniella is ready to go, and Rita is still in the bathroom brushing her teeth or at the table gobbling down her breakfast. Daniella yells at Rita to hurry up. Rita yells to wait a minute. Their mother tells Daniella to go on ahead of her sister and yells at Rita to hurry or she will miss the bus. Daniella doesn't want to leave without Rita and usually ends up crying. Often they have to run to the bus and get there just as the driver is pulling out. The bus driver has to stop the bus for the girls, and everyone has to wait while Daniella and Rita get on the bus. If Daniella and Rita miss the bus because Rita is late, their mother will have to take both children to school. (A male version, with male characters, is given to male participants.)

In this dilemma, we are asking the participants to consider the specific issues of 1) an older child being perpetually late for school and what to do about that, and 2) the younger child being upset by the older child's lateness. We listen for how and if they orient to the conflict between the two children, and the extent to which they do or do not distinguish different people's perspectives from each other. In the follow-up questions, we asked them specifically what would happen if their spouse did not agree with their solution to the problem. The reasoning task called for by the vignette is to be able to consider several subplots in one overarching dilemma.

The following themes emerged from the participants' responses at the Even Start site.

- Discipline/ Setting limits: This theme highlights how parents think about trying to help a child who is perpetually late for school in the morning learn to be on time. What kinds of things do parents do to change a child's behavior? How do they think about the behavior itself and what it might mean to the child, and what does it mean to change it?
- Resolving conflict between children: This theme/competence illuminates the ways in which parents understand and deal with conflicts between siblings when one sibling is upset by another's behavior and that dynamic is interfering with the well-being of both siblings. It is interesting to note that this issue was raised only by those participants making sense with a Socializing or Self-Authoring meaning system or at a transitional point between. This implies that participants making sense with the Socializing system and beyond are concerned with the feelings of each child and, being as sensitive to issues of empathy as Socializing knowers tend to be, they were especially sensitive to the conflict that seemed inherent in the dilemma.
- Resolving conflict between self and spouse: Parents do not always agree on the best ways to help their kids change difficult behavior patterns. This theme illuminates the ways the adult learners at Even Start think about and resolve the conflicts with their spouse over child-raising issues.

- Solving problems: This theme/competency deals with creating plans or strategies for dealing with problems. It is distinct from the issue of discipline and setting limits in that it is not about setting limits but understanding the problem and trying to do something about it in a more general way.
- Understanding the child or the child's behavior; taking the child's perspective; showing empathy for the child: This competency addresses the extent to which the parent is able to take the child's perspective, to see and understand that the child is perhaps dealing with an emotional issue that might be making him or her not want to go to school, and to see that the child's experience is very different from one's own. Parents with at least a Socializing way of knowing raised this issue, like Resolving conflict between children, almost exclusively.
- Teaching responsibility: The parents at Even Start by and large expressed a great sense of responsibility for teaching their kids and for helping their kids learn to take responsibility. The issue of who is responsible for what is a big one for these parents, e.g., what do they see as the child's responsibility, what can and should the child be responsible for.
- Teaching empathy: This deals specifically with parents' efforts to help their children understand the impact of their behavior on others, specifically on their siblings. This theme was also raised exclusively by those parents with at least a Socializing way of knowing.
- Role responsibility of mother: Most of the respondents at Even Start were mothers. The two fathers did not talk about what they saw as their responsibility in the role of father. Many of the mothers were quite explicit about their sense of responsibility as a mother.

A distinguishing feature of Even Start is the emphasis on the family unit, rather than just the individual adult student as at the other two sites. At Even Start, much of the program's focus is being good parents and ensuring their kids get a good education, so the competencies and themes spanned a broader spectrum of issues than at the other two sites. The adult learners at the other two sites did not talk about teaching responsibility or empathy in their responses to the dilemmas. The focus of their attention and conversation with us was their own personal goals. Family and relationships mattered and played into their decisions as is clear in the previous chapters. But the response to the dilemmas and the discussion of competence was a focus on personal goals and responsibilities. Because the dilemmas were written to elicit responses about their respective roles, learning sites, and environments, this kind of response is to be expected.

BHCC

The dilemma presented to the BHCC participants is as follows:

> Susan is in a community studies class in a community college. One day the teacher divided the class into groups of seven people each to work on an assignment. The teacher told the students that in order for the assignment to be successfully completed, each person in the group has to participate and contribute. The teacher then gave the groups specific instructions about what they were to work on in the groups. Susan's group gets together and starts to talk about the assignment. One person in her group says "I have a really great idea for getting this done. It's not quite how the teacher says to do it, but I've seen it done in other places and it's really cool and a lot of fun, and I think we'll actually learn more. What do you guys think?" Some students in the group nod their heads and say they'd like to hear more about it. A few other students protest and say that it's not doing the assignment the way the teacher instructed them to do it, and they don't want to do anything different from what was assigned. The group argues about which way to do the assignment and finally someone says, "Let's take a vote." Up to this point, Susan hasn't said anything. She realizes that her two good friends in the group disagree on what the group should do. One of them wants to go with the new ideas and the other friend wants to follow the teacher's instructions. From listening to the others argue, Susan also realizes that her own vote will break the tie in the group and decide the way it will go. Susan is not sure what to do. (A male version using male names is presented to male students.)

We are looking for responses that highlight both how the learner perceives and makes sense of the dilemma, i.e., what the dilemma *is* for the student, and the kinds of ways he or she would try to resolve it for him or herself. The reasoning that this dilemma calls for is to consider and resolve the issue of competing loyalties—having to make a decision that will inevitably be unpopular with one of the three players in the dilemma. Another reasoning task is to set oneself in relation to the authority figure.

The themes and competencies that emerged as important to the BHCC learners are:

- Responding to authority: For most of the learners at BHCC, the teacher held a particular and clear authority. This theme illustrates the differing ways that the learners at different levels make sense of and respond to the teacher's authority and how they deal with a teacher they do not like.
- Resolving conflict between competing demands and loyalties: The dilemma presented to the learners at BHCC required them to make a choice between following what the teacher said and what their good friends wanted to do, and to choose between one friend who wanted to go one way and another friend who wanted to go another. This competency illuminates the ways in which people can and do make sense of conflicting interests and competing loyalties and how they make the choice when one is required.
- Making decisions: This theme/competency is similar to the one of resolving conflict in that it is about making choices, but it takes a broader look at a learner's capacity to make decisions that are not necessarily about conflicts. It highlights the degree of the learner's sense of authority and

expertise and/or the extent to which he or she relies on other authorities for help or permission to make certain kinds of decisions.

- Taking responsibility for their own learning: As all of the participants were in school, learning is a central issue for them. They have their own goals for and expectations and definitions of learning, as well as an extent to which they take responsibility for their own learning. The learners also have their own ideas about how they learn.

These themes represent the variety of issues that the participants at BHCC grapple with in their role as students making their way through their college experience. For many of the students at this time in their lives, these themes also represent the variety of issues salient to them as they struggle to find their own sense of authority and their own way in the world while staying connected to the things and people that are important to them. As Chapter 4 clearly laid out, this particular time in one's life is filled with issues of identity, acculturation, acceptance, belonging, and independence. Each of the themes described above touches upon different aspects of these issues and asks students to reflect—perhaps in ways they had not before—on how they make decisions; negotiate conflicts and differences of opinion; take in and hold the authority of the teacher; and envision, plan for, and work toward their future. As they responded to the vignette, many of the students brought in other aspects of their lives, particularly their goals and hopes for their families and future careers. So, in the context of these participants' life phase, these themes reflect the competencies they struggle to achieve in order to set themselves up for their lives as independent adults.

Polaroid

The dilemma presented to the participants at Polaroid asks them to talk about how they would respond to the following situation:

> Anthony works on the floor in the Johnson Automotive plant. He has an office supervisor, Pat, and a floor supervisor, Chris. Anthony arrives for his shift and begins his work for the day. After about half an hour, he notices a small defect in his product. He knows some defects are small enough that they are not a problem. But Anthony hasn't seen this defect happen before. He doesn't think it is a problem, but he is not sure. It might be a mistake to keep producing with this defect. Anthony's supervisor, Pat, always tells him to use his own best judgment when making decisions. Anthony also knows that Chris, the floor supervisor, doesn't always agree with Pat. Sometimes Chris questions Anthony about the decisions he's made. Chris expects the people on the floor to do what Chris thinks is best. Both supervisors have said that production is behind schedule, and they want to catch up. Both supervisors are in a meeting for the next two hours. Anthony isn't sure whether to continue his work or wait. (A female version, using female names, was presented to the female participants.)

This vignette asks the participants to consider several different issues and to discuss how they would resolve the problems associated with them. We look at the extent to which participants feel able to make certain kinds of decisions on their own, how they manage that in the face of a potential conflict, and how they tend to respond to a disagreement between two authorities over the work they are supposed to be doing. In terms of reasoning capacities, this dilemma asks participants to demonstrate the ways in which they see themselves in relation to an authority figure, and how they do or do not distinguish their sense of the right thing to do from what others, particularly authority figures, see as right. Following are themes and competencies that emerged from the Polaroid data:

- Sense of responsibility: This theme encompasses the range of how the study participants relate to and understand their responsibilities in their respective jobs, who is responsible for what, and the hierarchy of responsibility within the organization.
- Making decisions: Although this theme is related to the sense of responsibility, it deals more specifically with what decision participants feel able to make, both within the confines of their job at Polaroid and in their lives outside work. As with the same competence in the BHCC data, this highlights the learners' own sense of authority and expertise and the extent to which they rely on their own authority or look to an external authority to make important decisions.
- Responding to authority: Everyone has a different response to authority. This theme illuminates those many responses in how individuals relate to the variety of authority figures at Polaroid—whether they feel able to argue with or challenge the authority or whether they accept the authority figure's word.
- Sense of duty: This theme illuminates how these participants talk about their sense of doing the right thing for the company and themselves. There is a very clear company standard and policy that many of the participants spontaneously raised, with varying degrees of personal investment in it. Some saw it as the set of rules they must follow, but others saw it as a guideline to add to their own sense of what is right.

Unlike the participants at BHCC and at Even Start, the participants at Polaroid have a certain settled quality to their lives, having worked at Polaroid for 20 years or more and seeming to have a fairly stable sense of identity. (Although several rounds of layoffs at the company during our work with them added a dimension of uncertainty, to be sure.) The themes generated from their responses to the vignette reflect their clear focus on their work. This might be caused in part by the focused nature of the vignette or it might reflect their sense of settledness.

The themes from the Polaroid participants are remarkably similar to those of the BHCC participants; there is one remarkable difference, however: The participants' actual discussions of these themes did not bring in or refer to other parts of their lives. This group of participants did not generalize the situation to their lives or make connections to their families when grappling with the dilemma presented. (They did talk about other aspects of their lives in other parts of our interviews with them, however.) Rather, they focused their attention squarely on the issues raised in relation to their job situations and requirements. Issues of authority and lines of responsibility, doing the right thing for the company and for oneself, and dealing with differences are salient for these participants and seem as important to being a good worker as performing the tasks correctly. These themes, then, reflect the ways that all of the Polaroid participants have a serious commitment to their jobs and to doing them well—a commitment to being and becoming more competent at what they do at work.

These three sets of themes, one from each of our sites, describe the issues raised by the dilemmas to which the participants responded. Although we cannot illustrate every demonstration of competence, we will now turn to a sample of the different ways the participants in our study demonstrated their competence in relation to the particular issue that seemed most salient at each site. We will illustrate these competencies across the range of meaning systems (or ways of knowing) from Instrumental to Self-Authoring.

DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCIES BY ROLE AND SITE

Following are three sets of responses, one from each site, from the participants in our study to the dilemmas presented above. These sets of responses illustrate a trajectory for the differing capacities and competencies that adult learners have and use to respond to and solve the dilemmas presented to them. Again, although many themes and competencies emerged from the data, here we present only one theme/ competence per site. Italics have been added to the quoted material to highlight the central tendencies of the particular meaning systems.

Even Start: Discipline/Setting Limits

Although the parenting role requires many skills and competencies, the one that seemed most salient and presented the biggest challenge to participants in our study was discipline and setting limits in an appropriate and productive way. Many if not most of the participants personalized the situation presented in the dilemma to their own families and the very similar issues they have with their own sons and daughters. Some of the strategies for setting limits are very similar across meaning systems. However, the ways in which each participant understood and made the strategy her own is quite different, thus demonstrating the differing capacities and competencies with which the participants can and do solve the dilemmas of their family lives.

Responding to the dilemma of how to help an older child get up and ready for school on time while the younger child waits and gets upset, the participants at Even Start responded in the following ways, demonstrating the competencies of each particular phase on the developmental continuum.

Instrumental Way of Knowing

> It is very hard to say what you have to do. What you can do is you can make [Rita] [late] one day so and the next day she might change and try to get up early so to get ready before Danielle. As I have some problem at home with my son and my daughter. My daughter used to wake up early. Usually she wake up early but when she goes to the bathroom, she is going to spend more than 30 minutes. And I say hurry up your brother has to use this bathroom, too. Hurry up, hurry up. **I sometimes I say you are going to go without no breakfast, and once she understood that she will be up and do everything. She doesn't want to miss the breakfast. Sometimes I give her a dollar to buy [a snack]. If you do not hurry today, I am not going to give you the money.** So she has to leave the house on time. . . . I say that because I know what they like. When they finish, you know what they like . . . **It is kind of a punishment to make her be on time. . . . You are going to find something. What they want to do you make them lose it and they will change.**

The mother responding here sees the dilemma in terms of the concrete behaviors of the children and structures her strategy and understanding exclusively around that. She seems to have found an effective way to get her daughter to change her behavior. Her strategy of punishment and "finding something they want to do and making them lose it" speaks to her perspective that if she makes a rule and institutes a punishment, the child's behavior will change. There is a very cause-and-effect sense that making the rule will cause a different kind of behavior, that doing the right thing is just a matter of knowing the rules. The competence demonstrated here is in her capacity to see rules as the way to shape and change behavior, and to create a specific rule that will be meaningful to the child, i.e., take away something important to her, have an impact, and give the child an incentive to change her behavior.

Transition from Instrumental to Socializing

The next response, illustrating the transitional phase between the Instrumental and Socializing ways of knowing, also relies on making rules and adds a new dimension of sensitivity to the child's feelings:

> Every morning I say that you need to wake up early. Every, every day, every night I told to her you need to go to your bed 8:30. If you do go to bed early, then the next day in the morning you have more time to wake up. **Every morning I told that, hurry up, Rosita, hurry up. And she cry because she didn't like to her when I yell. But sometimes I need to yell to her. . . .** The other things, the question for her is, in the night time he told me, she told me, mommy take care of my clothes. I take the [clothes] in the morning, they don't want to use the clothes. She wants another clothes. . . . In the morning she change her mind. I say, you see this? They don't match this? Every morning is the same problem. And they don't care what clothes he use. . . . I think it's hard in this situation when you, when you yell to her. **I know I don't like to yell to her because she don't like.** But sometimes I think it is no good if the, the both, they talk? and one have, do quickly.

This parent seems to be bewildered by the child's responses and changes of mind about her clothes and her inability to change her behavior. When she says, "But sometimes I need to yell to her," she seems to be relying on a set of rules or directions that she must follow but is not entirely convinced about, as she indicates by telling us that "I don't like to yell to her because she don't like." Her own feelings are directly affected by her daughter's feelings. So even while she says she does not like to yell, she seems caught by her sense that is all she can do and is bewildered because this doesn't seem to change her daughter's behavior. So there is, at once, the reliance on the concrete behaviors that ought to work but do not and the sensitivity to making her daughter cry. Her sense of bewilderment is perhaps due in part to her evolving sense of responsibility for her daughter's feelings, mingled with the concrete sense that the rules should be working but are not and the struggle to find a way to hold those two senses together. While this might not sound like a "competent" response, that very bewilderment lies at the heart of her competence. It prompts her to question rules and strategies that do not work, and it prompts her to a new sensitivity to her daughter's experience. She is demonstrating the reality of competence as a thing in motion, reassessing the old ways and trying a new way. For example, her competence shows in her efforts to understand her daughter's behavior and to see the patterns within it. Her sensitivity to her daughter's feelings about being yelled at and seeing that yelling might not be the best solution demonstrates another kind of competency—interpersonal skills, or being able to recognize and respond to another's feelings in a sensitive and appropriate way—that we think is important and is reflected in the EFF Standards as well.

Socializing Way of Knowing

The next response, illustrating a Socializing meaning system, also relies on some behavioral strategies but uses them within a wider social context, which includes a sense of connection to a bigger network and the possibility of help. The competence illustrated also demonstrates more complex interpersonal skills.

> Have her walk to school—she'll see that it's not fun, especially if the school is far from the house. Maybe that will help her get up early. Telling the principal and stuff of why she's late, maybe they could help with suggestions of getting her to be on time. . . . Because maybe different friends or anybody could help her with different—help her figure a way of how she can be on time. . . . So she can get her education. Be on time. **Not having her little sister crying and worrying about she's being late. Because instead of just Danielle being late, she's putting her sister in of being late too. And it looks like her sister likes to be in school. She must like learning. As for Danielle, to me it looks like she don't like school because she wants to be late. She's showing that she's hesitating of trying to go to school because she don't want to be there.**

Having the daughter walk to school and see that it's not fun teaches the daughter about the consequences of her behavior, helps her see a bigger view of the situation, and reflects the competence of the EFF Standard of Guiding Others. Looking to the principal and her daughter's friends as other sources of help and support demonstrates a competence for recognizing the importance of other people's opinions and expectations, and knowing how to draw on and use those supports to her and her daughter's advantage. This parent sees these others as supports not only in changing her daughter's behavior, but also in changing her daughter's understanding of what she's doing. The competence in this reasoning is the recognition that important others will have helpful ideas and opinions and will provide a fuller circle of support and encouragement.

The more telling of this response in terms of the Socializing way of knowing, however, is her clear concern for and attempts to understand the feelings of both children. The acknowledgment and interest in joining the internal experience of both daughters speaks to a meaning system that has at its core a sense of responsibility for the feelings of others, and for making sure the others feel understood and accepted. Another aspect of her competence, then, is in the use of this sense of responsibility to join her daughter and these important others in understanding the situation. This can attend to the problem of getting both daughters to school on time, her older daughter's feelings about going to school, and her younger daughter's distress at her big sister's causing her to be late. It can also get the wider community involved in supporting the daughter and, in doing so, supporting the mother and younger daughter.

Transition from Socializing to Self-Authoring

The transitional phase between the Socializing and the Self-Authoring meaning systems is now illustrated by this mother's way of setting limits:

> My oldest one like my country style breakfast. He want a rice and soup and some kind of vegetables, but that case, he want to eat something, I give him instead of a meal, only cereal. . . . Yeah. "Yesterday you didn't—today you didn't—today you doesn't, you don't ready for yourself, so it's only just a small breakfast because of the time." . . . so I think I can talk with him, he can understand what I saying. **And also he can understand what's the responsibility and what's the goal mommy's**

> **expect to him. He can understand. . . . That time I didn't say I want to miss his breakfast, skip his breakfast. And now I think my oldest one is understand my adult rule. It's not rule, but my action.**

Here again, the mother is teaching her son about the consequences of his behavior by giving him only cereal when he is late, not the big breakfast he likes. This strategy of helping a child see and understand the consequences of his or her own behavior is a competence that, in and of itself, is not necessarily the domain of any particular way of knowing. Rather, the distinguishing feature that connects this mother's competence to a particular way of knowing—in this case, the transition from Socializing to Self-Authoring—is the way she makes sense of her own choice as well as how her child will respond and understand her choice. In this quote, the mother is saying that she can talk to her child, that she knows he understands his own responsibility and his mother's goals for him. She is taking his perspective, joining her son in his understanding, and at the same time distinguishing between his experience and her goals for him. In doing so, she demonstrates both her sense of responsibility for his experience and her independent sense of what she wants him to accomplish and understand. That she also makes the distinction between a rule and her action ("It's not rule, but my action.") illustrates the capacity to make sense of an action as context-specific, with a particular goal in mind, and to distinguish it from a rule that might be more rigid and general. This perspective and the capacity to make these distinctions between her own goals and her son's experience, and between a rule and a context-specific action, *is* her competence.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

The following quote demonstrates the perspective, understanding, and competence of the Self-Authoring meaning system. This mother, like others quoted above, has a clear strategy for dealing with her child in the same kind of situation presented in the dilemma, and she demonstrates her competence with her unusual perspective:

> I have to get them dressed myself. . . . Yes I have to do that. If my son don't get out of bed when I tell him to, and I go upstairs in his room and take him in the shower, give him a shower myself, dry him myself and put on his underwears for him. He is eight years old, bigger than me, and I have to do all that stuff for him myself and make sure he gets on the bus and bye-bye. **But usually when you start doing it, when I start doing it for him, then everything else clicks for him, okay, mama is treating me like a baby, and no one wants to be, you know.** So the yelling the screaming, the kids, **I think they enjoy that because they are like, yeah, I can get you mad. I think the kids, sometimes, they don't understand, but they do it anyway.** You know. It is not even laziness sometimes, they do it to get attention, you know. I don't think it is anything else but trying to get attention. **And once they get the attention, it is not the attention that they wanted, you know. . . . Once I get him going like that maybe once or twice, and then the next day, you know, because they get embarrassed. They don't want the parents to see them nude. They don't want their parents, they are like, hey she is not giving me the attention, she is treating me like a baby.**

Again, it is not the strategy itself that is illustrative of the meaning system but the way in which this mother understands her own behavior, motivation, and intentions, and the way she understands her son's reaction to the way she treats him. In this example, the mother demonstrates her competence by making a clear distinction between her own experience and her son's experience; she has her own feelings about what she is doing, and her son has his separate feelings and reactions. This mother's competence is in her ability to "get inside the heads" of the kids, to understand their intentions and feelings and reactions: "I think they enjoy that because they are like, yeah, I can get you mad. I think the kids sometimes, they don't understand but they do it anyway," ***while at the same time*** maintaining her own sense of self and responsibility that is separate from theirs. She is aware of the distinctness of the child's psychological agenda and her own. They are connected by the situation, and she is able to understand and join in her son's reactions and wishes not to be treated like a baby. She sees his feelings as entirely his own. She knows she creates the situation for him to *elicit* those feelings, with the clear intention of teaching him something about his own behavior, but her own feelings about the situation are very separate from his, and she does not experience herself as the *cause* of his feelings. Again, her competence *is* this very capacity to take this broad perspective, to step back from the situation to see each of the various components—psychological and behavioral—of each of the players and create a deliberate strategy to draw from and play on all those components.

As noted earlier, we are not assessing the competence of the performance of any of these strategies but of the reasoning capacities with which they are created. We suggest that each of these parents is demonstrating a competence in her own particular way (all of the quotes come from mothers) and to the best of her abilities. A mother with an Instrumental meaning system cannot make the kinds of psychological distinctions between her feelings and her child's feelings that a mother with a Self-Authoring meaning system can. This does not mean, however, that the first mother is not a good mother or that she is not competent. In fact, she is *differently competent* from each of the other mothers, as they are all differently competent from each other. Each woman demonstrates her own "thoughtful capabilities" (Kerka, 1998, p. 3) and reminds us that "competence is not and cannot be a fixed concept . . . [and that] we need to recognize that in order to be competent we must constantly review and change our practice" (Hodkinson and Isset, 1995, p. 148). We recognize the competence of each of the parents quoted above and note the ways competence differs and changes with the evolution of the meaning system. Competence, like understanding, builds on itself.

A summary of the salient features of the competencies of each meaning system or way of knowing, based on the above analysis is presented below.

Meaning System	**Competence: Setting Limits/ Discipline**
Instrumental	Competence in setting limits is based on understanding of and reliance on concrete sets of behaviors and rules. The capacity here is being able to make a plan, create some rules, institute some punishment or concrete consequences that have meaning for the child, and be consistent in holding the child to it.
2/3–3/2	Competence is still based on understanding of concrete rules and behaviors with the idea that just by setting them, the child will change. The new concern for the feelings of the child even as the parent carries out the same strategy(ies), reflects a growing capacity to take another's perspective and a greater competence in including the child's feelings in one's decisions.
Socializing	Competence is based on recognizing and enlisting the help and understanding of other important people in the child's life, recognizing and enlisting the help of experts. Competence is demonstrated in the understanding of the feelings and internal experience of both children and reflects a full capacity to take another's perspective.
3/4–4/3	Competence is based on the parent's action to help the child understand the consequences of his own behavior. Sounds similar to the Instrumental strategy, but the competence here is in understanding what the child can understand separate from what the parent understands, and the emphasis is on both understanding and taking care of the child's feelings while maintaining an independent goal and expectation for the child.
Self-Authoring	Here, the competence is not based on teaching any particular behavior but on being able to help the child have a different understanding of what he or she is doing and the consequences of actions or behavior. The parent's competence is in seeing his or her own understanding and the child's understanding as very separate, that the child has a very different psychological agenda from the parent.

BHCC: Taking Responsibility for Learning

The participants at BHCC, like those at Even Start, responded to the dilemma in many different ways. Some issues raised were very salient to some students but seemingly irrelevant to other students. But this group of participants was very clear about reasons for being in the program and very serious about making education a priority. Taking responsibility for their own learning was something that nearly every student mentioned. Here are some examples of the ways the participants at BHCC made sense of their responsibility for learning and demonstrated their competence at doing so:

Instrumental Way of Knowing

This first example is in response to the interviewer's question about how the student would decide whether to follow the teacher's instructions or go with his friends and follow a different path with the assignment:

> I do by myself. Whatever I saw myself. What I want to do I would do . . . **I can't follow my friend. . . . Maybe he do something wrong. I have to look first what he do. If he do something right I will do with him. But if he do something wrong, I can't . . .** Yes, I decide [with] the teacher. . . . **Because the teacher, we study the teacher. We learn something from the teacher. You have to follow the teacher's rule. . . . She never gives us something wrong.**

The teacher has the ultimate authority for this student, who says, "We learn something from the teacher. . . . She never gives us something wrong," and he demonstrates his competence by respecting the teacher's position and authority and following her directions. For this student, learning seems to be inextricably tied to doing things right versus doing them wrong and following the teacher's rule. As the ultimate authority for this student, the teacher possesses knowledge and information the student needs. The student's sense of responsibility for his own learning and his competence in following through is in recognizing the teacher's authority and expertise and making his decision to "follow the teacher's rule."

Transition from Instrumental to Socializing

In this transitional phase, a person's competence can often appear diminished in comparison to the sense of confidence and sureness that goes along with it in the previous meaning system. Reliance on the teacher as the source of knowledge, rules, and grades continues but is challenged and transformed by the emergence of a need to belong in the group. In his new concern for his *relationship* to the teacher and to the other students, the learner can seem to be wavering between his need for the concrete rules and direction and the need to be part of the group. Rather than seeming competent, the student might appear to have lost his earlier competence. This student's response is to the question of how he would decide which version of the assignment he would choose to go with and why and illustrates that appearance of wavering.

> Because he is my teacher, I think he have good idea about what we learn. And I will see, though . . . [B]ecause he give assignment, he'll give a grade for the assignment...

> [If the group voted to do the assignment differently than the teacher said] I go with the group. . . . Because they win. . . . **This is because they make adjustment, I have to [be] part of the group. . . . But I tell the teacher that they don't want to do this assignment, but you have to change assignment to another one. He will talk with the group. . . . I think the teacher, he had experience about this, because he's the teacher.**

The authority of the teacher still holds as ultimate even as this student feels the pull of his sense of loyalty to the group. The two opposing psychological tugs are not easily reconciled and seem to create a tough conflict for him, as we see from his statement that he will "tell the teacher that they don't want to do this assignment, but you have to change the assignment to another one." He is trying to both stay in line behind the teacher and be part of a group that wants to follow a different path. Unable to let go of either side, he ingeniously comes up with a possible solution to do both at once. So rather than being *less* competent to choose a learning path and take responsibility for his learning, this student demonstrates a *new* kind of competence in being able to come up with a solution to his own dilemma. His competence is also in his new capacity to experience and acknowledge the two opposing tugs and to propose a solution that keeps his sense of obligation to each side intact.

Socializing Way of Knowing

The teacher's authority remains ultimate in a Socializing way of knowing. Not only is the teacher the authority on the subject in the classroom, but she is the bestower of judgment, validation, and acceptance as well. The teacher's ultimate authority can be mitigated somewhat by the presence and validation of friends, as this student demonstrates. The following is a response to the interviewer's question about how the student knows when she has learned something, and if she can know she has done so without the teacher telling her.

> **Not always, not always will she [the teacher] say to you, you have got it. [So] sometimes I do by myself because I will have a thesis, and then all of friends have the same and she will ask,** for example, I know the teacher discussed it a little bit, and I know she was wrong, and I have something that is similar [to what my friends have]. Okay, I am wrong, I got it, I have to do it this way. If I do that, I will got it. So it is like a little bit game for myself and everybody around me. . . . Of course, a lot of times when I learn something I read, **sometimes I didn't need the teacher's word [to say], yes, you are exactly right. I just know that I am right. It is like, yes, I have heard about it, or it looks familiar, or it sounds familiar and yeah, yeah, yeah, you are right exactly, honey.**

This student tells us that she doesn't always need the teacher's word to tell her that she is right, she can know she is right by referring to another source of authority, whether that authority is friends, having "heard about it before," or knowing that "it sounds familiar." Her competence, then, is in her ability to find this bigger, external context to hold what she knows and to choose which authority she will rely on to determine the rightness of her understanding. This student's sense of how she takes responsibility for her own learning is to make sure she is right in her understanding, and her competence is in her capacity to find trustworthy sources of authority for what is right.[3]

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[3] One caveat to the experience of the teacher as the ultimate authority is that some students find teachers who do not meet their expectations in some way, who they feel are not good teachers, and

Transition from Socializing to Self-Authoring

In the transition to the Self-Authoring meaning system, an internal sense of authority is evolving, even while the experience of the authority for knowledge and understanding being outside oneself remains:

> **First of all, try to understand very well what the teacher wants this assignment.** The final assignment to look like. I would make sure I understood it. I always do that. If I don't, **I will come to her and ask her once again to say to me in detail what that the assignment should look like, or the project. And then if I have clear picture how it's supposed to be, it's much easier to see one or two options, which one is better.** That's how I know.
>
> I would go with the group that's [going] for the new ideas. How come? Because . . . I would, at least I would like to hear about it more, and if it seems like a good idea to me too, if it sounds interesting, then it might sound interesting to the teacher too and if, if...you know a lot about the teacher, to know what he's like, if he like, you have to do like this, or is he open to, other [things] . . . So I would vote, and the group, because it would be part of [the group] . . . **Because if you make a mistake it's not just you . . . And I'm not alone, there's another half of group which you did mention, who are for that. . . . Basically, I'm always for something that is different or something that's** [inaudible]. **I hate to follow rules.** If there are, [inaudible] if there are like, **the teacher is like that, if he's not open for anything else, maybe he's the way for something, that could also like ruin your inspiration because if they like stick with what the teacher say, they might not made a good project. . . . If I'm alone, I know the teacher is very strict, and I know that I would be punished for it, of course I wouldn't go [with the group]. Then I would . . . have to manage that conflict. . . .** What be the hardest? I don't think anything is hard over there. In this situation, nothing. **If I'm alone, then I would be some difficulties, to make . . . because . . . I would have to put my personal beliefs against the rules and I'm all alone in it. Here I can put my personal against, and I'm not alone, there's a whole group.**

This student orients right away to following the authority of the teacher when she says she would "try to understand very well what the teacher wants [in] this assignment." But just as quickly, she lets us know that once she has a very clear sense of "how it's supposed to be," she can come up with some

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they drop the class. This does not necessarily mean the student has acted on a self-authored internal authority. The Socializing meaning system finds authority in ideas, philosophies, and institutional ideologies as well as in persons. If a student drops a class because he or she does not like the teacher, he or she could be acting on behalf of a shared identification with a particular way of thinking about what a good teacher is or could be dropping the class because he or she doesn't like the teacher and feels that the teacher doesn't like him or her, and this is untenable. As with any set of decisions or behaviors, we are looking at underlying meaning. Three people can make the same decision or act out the same behavior, and all have very different reasons, motivations, and meaning attached to it. Our job is to understand the action's meaning.

other options for how to do the assignment, thus demonstrating the capacity and competence to draw on her own internal authority to go with an option that seems better to her. At the same time, she acknowledges the importance, if not necessity, of being part of the group—having that company, having the support and validation for her personal beliefs, not having to stand alone "against the rules." Even so, she is willing and in fact prefers to stand against the rules as she makes very clear when she says, "I hate to follow rules."

Although this student is not explicitly talking about taking responsibility for her own learning, the fact that she prefers to at least hear new ideas, to always go for something different, and to have a teacher open to more than a strict view of the assignment, and that she fears a teacher closed to this could ruin the group's inspiration and their good project, all speaks to an inherent, unambiguous, and unambivalent desire to learn. The way she takes responsibility for continuing to learn is in going for different things, wanting to hear about the new ideas, and not following the rules, albeit with the support of the camaraderie in the group. Taking responsibility for her learning in this way *is* the competence she demonstrates. She has the capacity to draw on both her sources of support—her friends and the simpatico teacher—and her own internal sense of what she wants from her education. Being able to synthesize these internal and external supports to help achieve small and large goals is her competence.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

The Self-Authoring meaning system takes the perspective that rules and authorities are more guides and suggestions to use of in context rather than hard and fast rules to apply across the board. This student talks about how he sees following the teacher's instructions as a way to demonstrate his own opinions:

> Yes. It is not so much my conscious, but it is just a kind of rules I have to follow because it is a kind of game but there is some instructions they give to the player to follow, and if he doesn't work, these instructions I think it is, he is doing something else because I try to think about baseball, and there is a team and the rules they have to follow when they are playing this game. And if you are doing something else, like if you are playing basketball now, if it is baseball, people are not going to understand it. They know you are a good player before, but they expect you to do something way, and instead they see you doing some other kind of game like basketball in the baseball, it doesn't make sense. So I think, I don't got too much my conscious to understand that that is a thing that I can see right away. . . . So you are out of the game. And everything you do, you will be out. **And they don't know how to grade that. It is like some best baseball player. They don't know how to appreciate that the performers know that he is a good player because he doesn't follow instructions, he just goes like that. And no one understands what is going on because we don't have any—something like by which we can understand what he is doing. So it is kind of the assignment, it doesn't say if I follow the teacher's assignment that means I don't have to express my opinion, no I do so every time, I have to express my opinion through the homeworks. But what I have to do, before I express my opinion I have to answer to the question first and follow what they ask me to do, and then when I give my**

> **answer I can give that in my argumentation and try to explain my opinion also through the assignment.** And that would be good for me and for the teacher because now she is going to read what she expected to get and she also can have something more than what she asked me to do. And that can help the teacher to know and to understand. So I understand the lesson. . . .
>
> **So you have got to work different ways with different teachers but just try to do what they need you to give.** Otherwise you are just going to confuse, get confused and, like, too many things which are not important. So that is the way I understand that. **Because any class is, every class is different. So you have to get organized with one teacher of those classes and try to follow instructions, try to, sometimes when I learn, I try to be like the teacher. I think it works good for me. If I learn, for example, say psychology, I try to do my best to think like him, like psychology. It is easy for me. I don't know if it happens for anybody else. It is easy for me to understand what can I say.**[4]

This student knows that following the teacher's directions is important within the context of that teacher's particular class, but he doesn't experience it as a rule that he must follow to do things right. Rather he seems to use the teacher's directions and assignments as templates for demonstrating his knowledge and opinions, and for pursuing his own learning and understanding. He sees the rules as ways to provide the context for everyone involved to understand what the others are doing, not to dictate behavior or thinking—if you want to play the game you have to go by the rules. He takes responsibility for his learning by understanding the template of each class within the bigger system and working within that template. His competence is his capacity to use his understanding to make the system work for him even as he plays by its rules; it is his capacity to see the system as a bigger context in which he participates.

He demonstrates his competence by very deliberately adapting his learning to each teacher, as he says, "Sometimes when I learn I try to be like the teacher. I think it works good for me. If I learn, for example, say psychology, I try to do my best to think like him, like psychology. It is easy for me. I don't know if it happens for anybody else." A couple of things are happening here. One, he recognizes that everybody thinks differently, that each person—teachers in this case—has a *way* of thinking, a *system*, that it is possible to get inside, understand, and emulate: "I do my best to think like him, *like psychology*." Two, he recognizes, along with the fact that everyone thinks differently, that the same strategies do not work for everyone: "It is easy for me. I don't know if it happens for anybody else." He is demonstrating his understanding that each person, including himself, is understood to have, and is seen to be responsible for, his or her independent and individual agenda and way of making sense of things. He takes responsibility for his learning by using his understanding that other people have particular kinds of expectations depending on their context, and to reach one's own goals, one must, to a certain extent, meet those expectations. His competence is in his ability to do this very consciously and deliberately.

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[4] This student was not assessed to have a full Self-Authoring meaning system but to be in transition from Socializing to Self-Authoring. However, this passage reflected the Self-Authoring aspect of his meaning-making.

Following is a summary of the salient features of each meaning system or way of knowing as it relates to the competence of taking responsibility for one's own learning:

Meaning System	**Competence: Taking Responsibility for Learning**
Instrumental	The teacher is seen as the source of information and knowledge, as the ultimate authority. The student's competence is in the capacity to take responsibility for own learning by making sure he or she follows the teacher's rules and does the assignments the right way.
2/3–3/2	Same as above, with the added concern for being accepted and validated and the added competence of caring for the relationship with others in a new way.
Socializing	Competence is in the new capacity to shape and model oneself and one's learning on the example of the teacher or other trusted authority, and to seek that authority's validation for learning and being a good student.
3/4–4/3	Competence is in the emerging sense of one's own authority to decide the best way to learn while retaining the reliance on the teacher/authority and trusted others for support, validation as a good student, and camaraderie in trusting one's own authority.
Self-Authoring	Competence is in the capacity to see the teacher and the rules as guidelines or templates for creating the context in which the student finds and defines his or her own way to learn.

Polaroid: Taking Responsibility for One's Job

As with the participants in the other two sites, the participants at Polaroid raised many important issues in their responses to the dilemma we presented. The issue that seemed immediately salient to each participant was being able to be clear about their own sense of responsibility in their job and the decisions they felt able to make and those that they saw as someone else's (their supervisor or another authority in the hierarchy) responsibility. Like the participants in the other two sites, they tended to immediately personalize the dilemma with stories of their own experience that were very similar to the one presented, and with the circumstances of their own tasks. One participant whose way of knowing is Self-Authoring, did both—related and responded to the dilemma in the hypothetical situation and simultaneously related it to his own experience, moving back and forth between the two and using each to add to his explanation of his understanding of the appropriate thing to do in such a situation. In other words, to a degree that other participants were not able to do, this participant looked at the hypothetical situation and his own situation as specific in and of themselves, and at the same time, generalized the situation, issues, and lessons learned to illuminate all of the perspectives. Most participants focused their entire responses on their own situation. As with the previous two sites' data, we will present examples of the way participants demonstrate their competence through the ways they make sense of their particular job responsibilities and their overall sense of responsibility to and for their job, and the ways they use their differing understanding to do their best work in their positions.

Instrumental Way of Knowing

In response to the question about what she would do if she found a defect she hadn't seen before in the product she makes, this participant knew exactly what to do:

> If I check it and see the defect is big, it's not going to be acceptable, I would throw it away. Because we, when I was working downstairs, we made lens. When I cut those lens I see a lot of defects, scratches, anything, I just threw it away. And then I will tell them what was going on because they will ask me why I had too many rejects. **Then I will, always have one for example to show them. And sometimes I will call the mechanic, or I will call for help because sometime the machine will need to be cleaned. . . . When we have problem in the machine, we call the tech. . . . Or, if something is wrong with the** [inaudible]**, we call the mechanic. You know? If something's wrong with the light, you know, we call the electrician. Something. And then the tech will come, and then they will clean, you know, you know, they will, they will tell you,** Just throw it away until I come back. And then we have people from QC that will take a sample, then they will go check it, just like that. . . . **My job is to call somebody to check it. And then they will decide.** Because I might think, oh, this is no good, and then they will say, oh, that, that one is good. **So, they are the one who take their own, their decision.**

This participant has a very clear, unambiguous understanding of the hierarchy of responsibility, who does what, and who she should call to check the situation. Notice that in her description, the rules or guidelines about whom to call are unwavering, as is her adherence to them. Both her competence and her sense of responsibility about her job right come from these guidelines, the set of instructions about whom to call. It is not her job to decide whether the defect is bad but to know whom to call to make the decision. Her competence is in her confidence in these guidelines and in her clarity of understanding them and acting in accordance with them. She doesn't view these guidelines as a lack of confidence in her ability to judge or as management not letting her make decisions but instead feels more confident in her work because she knows the right channels to follow in each situation.

Transition from Instrumental to Socializing

Illustrating the transitional phase between the Instrumental meaning system and the Socializing meaning system is a participant whose competence is also in his adherence to the way things work at Polaroid and with the added concern and wish to be viewed favorably by his supervisor and coworkers. This new concern for how he is regarded by these others pushes his competence forward by providing an extra incentive.

> **Do your job the way you're taught to do, the way you train to be doing. I think that's the main frame of being, getting along with supervise, and do your best. Whatever the number they ask you to do, if you can, and I prob, I always do more than I asked to do.** Still I, I still came up with that all the time. **I don't want any, any problems with any supervise.** Every time they ask me for two, I give four or six. . . . A lot of people say I'm so fast and do, I, I can, [illegible] everything, if I can, I do, I'll do more. I don't just, I, I'm not just lazy. A lot of people, if they ask for, for one, they give only one. But if I can make it two or three, I do it. Well, I **think it's because I like to do the work, and I don't like to, to fool around at work. . . . That's, that is my way. . . .** And especially when I work now, I, I very

> concentrate on the quality before I go to the numbers and schedule. . . . I care, I think it's more important, quality than in schedule.

This participant's emphasis on his sense of responsibility and his resulting competence is founded on following his supervisor's orders or direction, doing what he is trained and asked to do. But he takes it one step further and tries to do better than asked and more than is expected. He says, "I don't want any problems with any supervisor." We don't know if he wants to avoid problems with a supervisor because of the concrete consequences (losing his job, perhaps) or because a problem with a supervisor would risk that person's positive feelings toward him. It could be either or both. Either way, he is demonstrating his competence by doing more than he is expected to do. He describes why he does more than asked by saying, "I think it's because I like to do the work, and I don't like to, to fool around at work. . . . That's, that is my way." He is describing himself and his work style in simple, concrete terms: "I like to do the work, I don't like to fool around; it's my way." Yet within this concrete description is also the emergence of a more abstract sense of self and self-at-work. To say "it's my way" is a kind of generalization to a way of being rather than just a concrete description of what he does. He is describing a philosophy, albeit still a fairly concrete one, about his *attitude* toward his work, a philosophical stance, a way of being a good worker. That stance and his enactment of it *are* his competence.

Socializing Way of Knowing

The respect for the authority of her supervisor this participant describes when it was urgent for her to decide to wait for her supervisor to complete a task is one of the hallmarks of the Socializing way of knowing as well as one of her strongest competencies.

> It was 16,000 piece of mail that should go out that day . . . and the people, the stuff that was stuck in envelopes, was small then envelope, way, way small than envelope, . . . not too big. Every time we put in the machine, the stamp didn't show, nothing. If we kept doing that, we would spend a lot of money because it was 55 cents each, it was 16,000, and that was a lot of money. And they went through that envelope, they would lose all the stamps, and I stop. I told the guy that I was with, I said stop until she comes back. And when she comes back, then we show her, she said good thing you used, because we would have lost a lot of money. Would have cost more money to start them all over again in another envelope. . . . And I got a raise, . . . you know why? For all the money they would [have lost], now we give you... Yeah, that was, anyway, I got my raise. . . .
>
> You have to think before you do something, or say something, you have to think. . . . **I think you have to have permission to do any job that you do. If you have permission to do, to help, your supervisor will be nice for you, will be nice for him or for her.** Because if she will be [inaudible] for you, [inaudible] she help me, that means that they ask for your help, if they tell you, do this job, **I want this job this way, you gotta go with the flow. You gotta do this way, or, even if you don't like it, you have to stick up for that.**

This participant's competence is evident in her capacity to recognize the problem and take the action to stop, knowing her supervisor would approve. She knows she does not have the authority to make decisions without her supervisor's permission, and her competence is in her capacity to respect that authority and even go one step further to be as helpful as possible. Her sense of mutuality and reciprocity contributes to her competence in that she wants to do well by her supervisor so that it will not only look good for her supervisor, but for herself, too. Then they both "win" and have a stronger relationship as well.

Transition from Socializing to Self-Authoring

In the transition from the Socializing meaning system to the Self-Authoring meaning system, the supervisor's authority still dominates but is tempered by the person's growing sense of competence and confidence in his own perspective and judgment and willingness to stand up for what he believes is right, even when someone else disagrees.

> I think better to shut down the machine and resolve the problem before you do other things wrong. Before, if you do something wrong, so you lost money, for the company [inaudible] **so you have to stop machine and convince the supervisor, show him exactly what's wrong and what you think he's supposed to do to fix the problem. . . .** Because this story is exactly what's happened with me on work. . . . Exactly. Because I do some products is called OEMs, is some kind of glass for plane, the shades for the window, the screen for computer, because we use different kinds of filter. So I have . . . two supervisors, I have engineers for the materials in the skid what they're supposed to do, if you put this color in this color, was have this color, so [I] have supervisor, then when you do something, . . . somebody inspect your job, . . . but on a morning, the person inspect my job work on the night shift, on the morning when I comes, so I found the note, what kind of rejects. I don't agree with those rejects. Don't agree with those rejects, I think that's good to save cost. So I called the engineer, sees kind, she don't say exactly this is good, she don't say this is bad. It's between me and person who inspect.
>
> **Sometime I feel bad when I have to call the manager to come in and stand me, to show him the problems and to tell him, see if you found it so, this is marked rejects, they're marked rejects, but they're clean, good job. . . .** I clean the parts she's thinks it's rejects, I keep the money [inaudible]. Okay, I'm gonna sell you this project. See if you find any kind of rejects on this product. So . . . look, put on the light, say that's perfect, I don't see nothing.
>
> **This is exactly the problem I have. So the inspector said this is rejects, so my supervisor is engineer, [says] maybe this is a reject, I want you to know if it's a reject, if you don't [see] nothing, I think that's . . . your judgment, then ship those things. So I sign and ship, never this come back. Never.**
>
> **Sometime you get those kind of things, like you're a little bad, when I have to go over my supervisor, and go to the plant manager to do that. But, so that's**

> **the kind of things you have your own judgment,** because if you run piece, she's take 50 piece but maybe is 10 is rejects, and 40 is not really rejects... **So, you feel a little bad, because you do a lot of work and you put all your attention on the things you do, somebody tell, oh, this is a reject, I don't want to ship this one, when you go you found that's not rejects so sometimes you have to do something. You don't like that** . . . she says, reject, rejects, **so you not going to have no credit with your worker because you do just rejects,** you put your attention when you do the same . . . before you do lamination, those kinds stuff, **so, when you fight, only your products you think that's okay, you have to be straight and you have your own judgment. . . . So to respond the rejects, have to find somebody else to convince him that's not rejects.**

This participant's essential competence here is that he knew he did a good job, that his work was not a reject and that despite feeling bad about going over his supervisor to the plant manager, he will defend his work, that the quality of his work speaks for itself. At the same time, he feels bad about going over his supervisor and is clear that good relationships with his supervisor and coworkers, and the way they perceive him, are important to him, saying "She says, reject, rejects, so you not going to have no credit with your worker because you do just reject." Nevertheless, his competence is his recognition and respect for both the quality of his own work and for his supervisor, and his conviction and capacity to defend his work even if it means going outside the bounds of the hierarchical structure and risking his good relationship with his supervisor. His competence is also his concern about being well respected by his coworkers and his supervisor, and so he is diligent about keeping the quality of both his work and his relationships high.

Self-Authoring Way of Knowing

A person with a Self-Authoring meaning system can step back from a situation to see it from the perspective of each person involved as well as his own, and can see each perspective as separate and distinct. This capacity leads to a particular kind of competence for seeing the big picture.

> Okay, what I'm saying is **that Anthony shut the machine down, he done his maintenance, he checked the machine out he found nothing in there that was causing the defect. So he shut the machine down.** Now Chris comes by, asks Anthony why the machine's down. Anthony shows him the 10 pieces he made with the defect in it, and he explained to him, that he cleaned the machine, did everything he could in his possibility to get rid of the defect, which he couldn't get away from the defect, so he shut the machine down. **So now Chris turns around and looks at the product and feels it's not that big of a deal of a defect.** So he decides to tell Anthony to go ahead and run the product or run the machine. To keep producing. **So Anthony says to Chris, well, if you want me to continue to run,** then you **sign off the work order for the day of the day of the product that I made.** Which now he does that.
>
> Chris is the floor supervisor, **I made my judgment, I made my call. Now Chris comes by and he took it away from me, he took it out of my hands. He's the one that decides to run, so therefore it's Chris responsibility now for the**

> **product I produce for the day.** Now Pat comes along and looks at this piece, Anthony, you got a defect there, you didn't do nothing about it, yes Pat I did, I shut the machine down, I done what I was supposed to do, done the cleaning, check the valves and all that, I ran and the defect was there. **I shut the machine down, Chris came by, he elected to tell me to run the machine. I had him to sign the work order to continue to run. Therefore I did my part, I did my job, that's my ability to [show] that I did. Now if there's any recurrence, you go see Chris. [So it's] my decision and my responsibility when it comes to that, yeah, shut the machine down. I done my responsibility, I've done my job, I've done my work.**

This participant is also quite clear about the lines of responsibility, in what almost sounds like a very concrete way. However, the way that Anthony attributes an individual agenda to each player and has done all he can do, given the power and responsibility of his position, speaks to his competence in his capacity to recognize the multiple truths, realities, and perspectives within any situation. He also weaves his own position into the story and implicitly expresses his frustration that he can't follow through with his own judgment but has to bow to the authority of the supervisor: "I made my judgment, I made my call. Now Chris comes by, and he took it away from me, he took it out of my hands. He's the one that decides to run, so therefore it's Chris's responsibility now for the product I produce for the day." One aspect of his competence is that he is willing to take responsibility for his own decisions but not for a decision he disagrees with, even if someone higher in the organization makes it. By having the supervisor sign off on the work order, he can reconcile continuing work he doesn't think is right. The issue for this participant's competence is not whether he actually shuts down the machine, but that the decision is taken out of his hands. Some participants assume that their responsibility is limited and that someone else will take the responsibility for a decision. This participant feels frustrated that he can't act on his own judgment and decision. That he follows his supervisor's orders does not necessarily mean that he accepts the other's decision as right. Rather, this participant demonstrates his competence by recognizing the power structure inherent in the hierarchy in his particular situation, and while actively disagreeing with it, acknowledges the necessity of working within it and does so. He doesn't give up his own sense of what is the right thing to do but works within the system.

Following is a summary of the differing competencies of the different ways of knowing or meaning systems:

Meaning System	**Competence: Taking Responsibility for One's Job**
Instrumental	Competence in taking responsibility for one's job is based on knowing and following the rules, knowing who to call to make the right decision.
2/3–3/2	Competence in taking responsibility for one's job is based on doing one's job as one has been trained, with the added incentive of caring about and wanting to have a good relationship with the supervisor, wanting the supervisor to be pleased with one's work.
Socializing	Competence in taking responsibility for one's job is based on being very clear what one has been given permission to do and knowing when to wait for the supervisor to make the decision. Following the directions of the supervisor results in a mutually beneficial relationship: The supervisor will be nice to and trust the worker and will ask the worker for help, which is nice for the supervisor, too.
3/4–4/3	Competence in taking responsibility for one's job and performance is defined more and more by one's own evolving internal authority and standards for what is right to do. The supervisor's authority is still held as definitive, and there is a concern for maintaining a good relationship with him or her. Both experiences of authority—internal and external—modify and enhance one another.
Self-Authoring	Competence in taking responsibility for one's job is based on and defined by one's internal standards, sense of personal authority, and acting on that authority. Competence is also based on the capacity to see the bigger picture and the multiplicity of perspectives and opinions, and to act in such a way as to enhance both the system within which one works and one's own position. Decisions are made on the basis of personal assessment of the situation and degree of authority within the organization.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS

The implications of adopting and applying a developmental view of competence, although not offering any quick assessment tool, hold out the possibility for a model of building success upon success. If adult learners' competence is recognized, assessed, and understood in context, and learners are encouraged to recognize and value their own competence—i.e., what they *can* do—and build on that, it is quite possible and even quite likely that the sense of empowerment accompanying a real experience of competence (even if not yet what one wants to have) gives learners, their teachers, and their program directors a way to mark, value, and celebrate the learner's growth. It also allows us to acknowledge competence as *growth*—that it will be ongoing, that the learner is always in process, and that competence is not an endpoint but a continual jumping-off point. This view recognizes where one has come from and where one may still want to go, and it keeps the learning *process* in perspective.

We see two components to the notion of competence building on itself: There is an increased sense of confidence when one experiences a new sense of mastery and capacity in a particular area. The increased confidence spurs one on to new challenges. At the same time, the new sense of mastery and capacity gives one access to a whole new set of tools and capacities which in turn opens new ways to respond to and manage the complexities of adult life. Confidence and mastery are mutually enhancing and continually build and reinforce one's competence.

A developmental view of competence can also encompass the best of both ends of the spectrum of the debate over what to teach and how to assess it. It recognizes the value of and need for an exclusive focus on basic skills for some learners and at the same time allows learners to help shape their own learning and this learning to build on itself to insure further success and growing competence.

As we have noted and argued throughout this work, the importance of the holding environment cannot be underestimated. It is within the context of the holding environment that one *becomes* competent. The expectations of the holding environment, as we stated earlier, hold the bar for competent performance and mastery of whatever skill, whether basic and concrete or abstract and interactive, the learner is trying to achieve. We have argued that the holding environment must actually hold several different bars for mastery and competence that will be meaningful and accessible to learners at different points along the continuum.

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CHAPTER NINE

Towards Meaning-Centered Considerations of Policy and Practice: Summary and Implications

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Over the course of the past three decades, psychologists have generated, elaborated, and applied the insights brought about by explorations of the development of mind to the larger question of how adults can be helped further their development in positive, life-enhancing ways. The introduction of developmental perspectives has enlivened conversations about how adults know, grow, and become more capable of managing the ever-emergent complexities of adult life. These perspectives rest on the basic assumption that there is a trajectory of desirable growth of mind that can be described and measured in ways respecting individual differences while highlighting continuities of experience. In this monograph, we have consistently applied developmental psychological perspectives to the experiences of adults learning in ABE/ESOL settings. We believe, based on our findings, that our application of this perspective sheds light on rich ongoing debates in adult basic education and informs an understanding of learner experience and teacher practice in ABE/ESOL settings.

What is equally compelling to us as psychologists and educators is the impact our study has had on the ways in which we conceptualize adults developing. Because prior research on adult development focused largely on white, middle-class, college-educated adults, we respectfully wondered how helpful our framework would be in understanding a more diverse group of learners' experiences. In essence, what we discovered is that our framework itself developed in response to and in relationship with our data. In the Introduction, we presented the construct of "cultures of mind." In concluding, we will dwell a little longer on how we have come to understand the role and nature of consciousness development for the adult learners who participated in our study.

At the heart of our exploration and analysis has been what we have called the pursuit of understanding participants' "meaning-making." We see the active, ongoing, systematic interpretation of experience as the motion of development. By this we mean we attended to how participants thought, felt, and talked with us about their programs because their understandings more than their observed behaviors suggest how well and fully they are making use of their educational experiences to further their own purposes. In our framework, the shape of meaning-making is regulated by a person's level of development, and therefore a familiarity with developmental principles can bring us closer to an empathic understanding of personal experience. But meaning-making carries a broader connotation as well. It also signifies the shared understandings that people from a common region, background, or network of values express together. In this study, we came to an understanding about the rich interplay between personal meaning systems and shared meaning systems. We especially came to an appreciation of the delicate and brave reshapings of personal meaning systems adult learners must take on when moving into a new culture with a new set of shared meanings, thus provoking a set of challenges to their existing view of themselves (their identity) and to the performance of their roles (as parents, workers, and learners). We did not embark on a study of acculturation in the typical sense of the term. Yet we found ourselves engaged in a persistent exploration of how individual and collective meaning systems must come into some form of workable balance if adults are to find their lives engaging rather than overwhelming, potentially uplifting rather than persistently demoralizing. We have come to call this broader exploration of the interweaving of personal and social systems of meaning characteristic of adult learning and growth in our three sites a "cultures of mind" approach.

We are indebted to the adult learners who participated in our study for helping us expand our thinking so to better represent the aspects of their experiences not previously considered in adult developmental research. Based on an extensive consideration of our data, we believe this framing of our developmental perspective has multiple implications for teaching and learning in ABE/ESOL settings, which, for the purposes of discussion here, we have cast in three areas:

1. **A richer understanding of aspects of ABE students' experiences, invoking the need for a "new pluralism"**

2. **A description of the developmental demands of ABE education, invoking the need for a broader conceptualization of its functions and purposes**

3. **A prescription for possible features of classroom and program design, invoking the need for new approaches to program evaluation**

Here, we lay out the findings from our study and elaborate on their implications for future work in ABE settings.

New Pluralism

Adult educators have long understood the need to account for learner differences when fashioning curricula that both meet learners' existing needs and challenge them to expand their perspectives. Among learners in our study, notable variations in educational background, social class, country of origin, ethnicity, gender, and social role meaningfully shape each individual's classroom experience. The teachers we encountered were thoughtfully intentional in creating classroom environments that met the needs of adult learners from varied backgrounds. In part, their success rested on an ability to seek out and take seriously the meaning learners were making of their classroom experiences.

In this monograph, we have called attention to a way of understanding learners' meaning-making and, by so doing, have pointed out yet another type of persistent, important difference among adult learners. Learners in each of the sites we studied demonstrated diversity in their developmental mindsets or ways of knowing. Prior research (Commons et al., 1990) on adult development anticipates this finding; it is common for adults who share a similar cultural background to nonetheless vary in their developmental positions despite similar ages or common backgrounds. Another way of saying this is that we do not expect age or ethnic background to predict adults' developmental positions. A question we brought to the present study was whether or not adults with widely varying ages and backgrounds (representing a greater variety than has been typically studied) would also demonstrate variations in developmental positions. Apart from adding to our understanding of adult development generally, this question matters for teachers and program designers who aim to listen closely to learners' reports on their experiences.

In each of our sites, we found that participants varied in their developmental positions along a continuum not unlike that shown by participants in previous research studies with more homogenous samples. At one end of the spectrum, Instrumental ways of understanding were dominant for at least one learner per site. Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, there were several learners at each site for whom Self-Authoring ways of understanding were dominant. (In fact, at two of the sites, Even Start and Polaroid, there were learners who operated solely with Self-Authoring ways of understanding.) At all three sites, the majority of learners demonstrated some degree of Socializing ways of understanding. From a theoretical perspective, the range of developmental positions lends credence to the relevance of developmental position as an important form of diversity even among samples with wide variation in age and background. The diversity we found also addressed our initial concerns that developmental theories have traditionally described white, formally educated, and economically privileged adults. Critics of these theories might predict that learners from lower socioeconomic statuses or with fewer years of education, on average, than white middle class samples would likely show up on the lower end of the developmental continuum. In fact, we found the range in the complexity of ABE/ESOL learners in our study is not markedly different from the range found among samples of native English speaking adults with varying educational backgrounds and widespread socioeconomic levels.[1] The distribution of developmental mindsets reported in research studies tends to correspond with ours, where the largest group of participants demonstrate some aspects of Socializing ways of understanding, with fewer participants governed by either Instrumental or Self-Authoring ways of understanding.

The profile of ABE/ESOL learners does *not*, therefore, skew toward the low end of a developmental continuum. Furthermore, differences in developmental capacity were not highly associated with level of formal education. ABE/ESOL learners with limited formal education, such as Jeff at Polaroid or Dalia at Even Start, nonetheless demonstrate developmentally complex ways of knowing and both are Self-Authoring knowers. Nor does formal education guarantee higher levels of complexity. At all three sites, there are learners who completed some university study in their home country who do not yet demonstrate Self-Authoring capacities.

From a practical perspective, we imagine that teachers who are already masters of attending closely to important differences among students can use the additional frame of developmental position to organize their understandings of how groups of students might make sense of important events in similar ways. In fact, we argue that one way of capturing and applying the insights of a developmental perspective that links our contribution to the framework of existing debates in ESOL/ABE settings is to suggest that a range of developmental positions in a classroom represent a new form of *pluralism*. At first, this suggestion may seem counter-intuitive, as our framework specifies the forms of understanding linked to particular positions rather than the many differences among individual voices. Our data analysis suggests that learners' unique voices can compel our attention in their individual differences while simultaneously being considered from the viewpoint of consistencies linked to developmental position. Essentially, we suggest that the construct of pluralism needs to be roomy enough to include any perspective that helps make sense of important differences among sub-groups in a classroom experiences.

Our findings can be further extrapolated to suggest that teachers and program developers might likely find and should therefore be prepared to have developmentally diverse populations in any given ABE/ESOL program. The distinctions among these developmental mindsets indicate that these groups of learners will experience their learning and their programs in fundamentally different ways. (While the largest number of students might share some aspects of Socializing ways of understanding, many might be bound by Instrumental or Self-Authoring ways of understanding.) Not only are they likely to experience the same activities and information differently, they may therefore respond best to different kinds of supports and different kinds of challenges. We invite adult educators to take these forms of difference into account when considering learners' experiences.

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[1] See R. Kegan, *In Over Our Heads* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 195.

The diversity among learners' ways of knowing therefore calls for a second aspect of new pluralism. To attend to all students' learning needs, educators must consider their pedagogical stances and strategies from multiple perspectives. This amounts to a new definition of the "resource rich" classroom—one that includes good pedagogical matches to a variety of students' cultures of mind. Our study thus suggests the value of ABE/ESOL practitioners developing a deep understanding of this new variable—culture of mind—as expressed in the ABE/ESOL setting and seeks to be a resource for practitioners who want to develop this understanding. Orienting to the diversity of developmental mindsets in addition to the other important types of diversity among learners can give ABE/ESOL teachers and program developers powerful new insights into learners' experiences and the ways that programs can respond to their strengths and needs.

In asking practitioners to be receptive to a new pluralism among learners, we are not suggesting they should only orient to the differences among learners. As we have stated throughout this monograph, despite the readily apparent differences among the learners in our study, a cultures of mind approach enables us to understand important similarities among them. This approach demonstrates there are consistent and predictable ways in which learners who share a developmental position also share important ways of understanding themselves, their learning, and their environment. We see these similarities across a range of aspects of learners' lives, including the ways they conceive of their experiences, their aspirations, their classrooms and teachers, the programs and institutions in which they are enrolled, and their relationships to U.S. culture and their native cultures.

A final aspect of our new pluralism lens is that neither the differences nor the similarities among learners are fixed. In that respect, our study challenges expectations about the possibilities for change in adult learners' ways of knowing. Often, those who are newly introduced to and excited about developmental psychology want to know how they can inspire transformational changes in themselves and others. We remind them that increases in complexity are necessarily gradual and incremental, and if and when notables changes occur, they may be measurable over the course of years or even decades. Developmental psychologists are therefore likely to expect to see no qualitative developmental change in individuals observed for as brief a period as one year. It may come as a surprise then that several of the ABE/ESOL learners in our study underwent such development. These changes were particularly remarkable at the Polaroid site, where 8 of 16 learners demonstrated higher levels of complexity in their final interviews than at the time they entered their diploma program. For learners who showed increases in their level of development,[2] our theory would argue that they had greater capacities to take on and manage the complexities of their lives across relevant roles, such as worker, parent, learner. We posit, therefore, that for these learners, ABE/ESOL learning is in itself a developmental event, in which learners are invited to consider and perhaps alter or elaborate on their previous ways of knowing.

In the remainder of this chapter, we will revisit the ways our cultures of mind approach contributes to a better understanding of learners' self-conceptions, illustrating how their developmental capacities help us understand learners' purposes and motivations for learning, their sense of internal control over their lives, and the ways that they reclaim and reconstruct various aspects of their social identities. Where relevant, we will also describe how students' conceptions changed over the course of their program by either growing increasingly elaborate or increasingly complex.

We will also revisit important similarities and differences in students' descriptions of their classrooms and programs. Students with similar developmental mindsets reported similar definitions and explanations of good teaching, helpful learning activities and experiences, and supportive classroom cultures. There are also similarities in the ways that they construct ongoing relationships to U.S. culture and their native cultures. Additionally, the ways these conceptions differ across different developmental mindsets is an equally important part of our findings. Drawing on these similarities and differences, we offer several implications for practitioners within the ABE/ESOL field. Finally, we suggest it is important to consider why so many learners developed against expectation and propose that a well-structured program with the right mix of design features and skilled teaching can move adults further and faster in their development than is the typical trajectory in adult life.

Better Understandings of Aspects of Learner Experiences

In light of the ways that students' understandings of themselves are likely to differ in important ways and have the potential to change over the course of a program, teachers might conceive of the ABE setting as a context for self-recreation and elaboration. This process became particularly apparent to us as we watched learners new to the English language and to U.S. culture grow increasingly confident and comfortable in their new home. For recent immigrants, the experience of moving into a new culture presents multiple and formidable challenges. The challenges of learning English and of understanding and performing key skills and behaviors valued in U.S. culture and institutions may combine to threaten an individual's sense of identity. Unable to express who one is or how one knows can cause an individual to experience difficulty in establishing mutually satisfying relationships with Americans. Such challenges essentially constitute threats to one's way of knowing. Entering an ABE/ESOL program can therefore facilitate an immigrant student's reclamation of an identity in the new culture. At Even Start, for example, parents re-establish confidence in their role while also elaborating on existing skills and perspectives to bring in newer, broader options for how they might parent.

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[2] Conceivably, learners for whom clear advances were made in the elaboration or consolidation of their meaning-systems (but who did not evince a measurable change in developmental level) could be included in the group for whom ABE programs were a developmental event.

Our cultures of mind approach helps us see how American ABE students are also undergoing related transitions. Although they may not experience the same dramatic sense of loss and stress that accompanies a move to a new culture, these students demonstrated similar processes of identity re-creation. In all cases, these changes constituted increases in skills and knowledge, which gave learners access to new possibilities at work, as students, and as parents. Across all three settings, we noticed that learners' purposes and motivations grew more elaborate, including new and perhaps previously unrecognized possibilities. In many cases, these new goals include plans for continued education. For example, at BHCC, Minh reported that her success in the first semester of the program enabled her to consider transferring to a more competitive four-year university. At Polaroid, Rita decided she valued her learning so much that she began to develop the wish to attend at least two years of college after receiving her high school diploma.

Our initial explorations of this topic have helped us see interesting consistencies across students' descriptions of their reasons for enrolling, consistencies which are linked to developmental capacity. Students operating with Instrumental ways of understanding orient to concrete goals and skills they hope to acquire through their participation in ABE/ESOL programs. These students describe the types of work tasks they do and do not want to perform, and they aspire to support themselves and their families with better-paying jobs and desirable benefits packages. Students governed by Socializing ways of understanding also mention these goals as important to their entrance in their programs. However, they also orient to more abstract reasons for enrolling and attending, frequently describing how important others might value their increased learning. These students often refer to their desires to fulfill their parents' hopes, earn their children's respect, or find societal approval. In addition to valuing the concrete rewards of increased education, they are able to appreciate learning for its own sake and careers as aspects of their identity involving more than specific work tasks. Self-Authoring knowers at all three sites focus more on how increased education can give them the ability to exercise or enhance greater self-direction. They are less likely to value concrete aspects of their work, such as increased salary, as goals in themselves and more likely to view them as means to achieving other self-identified goals.

The acquisition of new skills and knowledge enabled all learners to re-connect to or elaborate on their identities, including their goals and aspirations. As some of these learners undertook these changes, their very ways of knowing were also transformed. These transformations enabled and necessitated new forms of self re-creation, and learners' purposes and motivations grew in the direction of increasing complexity. Transformational changes were particularly evident at Polaroid, where learners with some elements of Instrumental knowing, such as Bill, Renada, Sal, Hope, and Rita, grew to recognize and orient more to their own and others' internal psychological experiences as important to their goals and purposes for participating in the diploma program. Three Polaroid learners—Paulo, Daniel, and Magda—increasingly viewed their expanding skills and knowledge in light of self-authored goals and purposes.

The differences in and changes to these students' orientations suggests that ABE/ESOL teachers might best serve their students by providing curricula including a variety of elements directed toward different types of personal development and skill gain. Although many learners operating primarily with Instrumental ways of understanding will feel that their identity reclamation could best be achieved by acquiring and performing new sets of skills, other learners who have developed Socializing and Self-Authoring ways of knowing are likely to be unsatisfied by programs that focus only on skills. These students are apt to be interested in focusing on how these skills are part of larger contexts and how they might serve larger purposes. These learners appreciate having a curriculum that affords them opportunities to reflect on their own lives.

When we consider familiar tensions between orientations toward "informational" learning (or skill development) vs. "transformational" learning (or personal empowerment), our findings suggest that the content and the organization of goals and motives are associated with developmental position and can be pushed in important ways by developmentally attuned curricula. Developmentalists have commented on the emergence of the capacity to name and reflect on goals as a developmental accomplishment (Nakkula, personal communication) and one that needs to be scaffolded in adolescents. Other researchers have suggested that forming goals that adequately capture the tension between current accomplishments and future aims requires developing Self-Authoring forms of knowing (Fritz, 2000). Our study contributes to these findings and supports teacher practice by demonstrating through examples how ABE learners construct, reshape, and reflect on their goals, motives, and purposes for program participation.

Apart from the learners' hopes, we also explored their sense of control over their lives and their satisfaction with life as two important aspects of the learner experience. The results of our paper and pencil measures suggest learners with higher levels of development were more likely to indicate that they perceived they had internal control over their lives. This finding seems consistent with what developmental psychologists might expect. For example, individuals who demonstrate Self-Authoring capacities can identify and orient to the perspective of important others in their lives and of the larger cultures they inhabit. However, their understandings are not bound by these perspectives. Instead, Self-Authoring individuals possess the ability to evaluate the usefulness of these perspectives in light of their own individually constructed purposes. It seems logical, therefore, to expect that the demonstration of these capacities might correspond to stronger perceptions of internal control over one's own life.

Having speculated on the reasons we find this association between individuals' perceptions of control and developmental capacity, we feel it is important to note our own hesitations in unreservedly embracing this interpretation. Individuals can also demonstrate Self-Authoring capacities through the act of recognizing and critiquing constraints social institutions impose on their power and authority. For example, whether or not many learners in our study maintain their social role as students or workers is dependent on institutional decisions about financial aid or workplace layoffs. These participants may understandably feel important areas of their lives are governed by others' decisions. Thus, it is possible for a Self-Authoring student to perceive she has little control over some important events in her life while retaining authority for the meaning she assigns to these events.

We therefore wonder whether this finding might be replicated by subsequent studies and underscore the need to further examine the relationship between developmental complexity and perceptions of control. One implication we can draw from these findings serves as a caution to educators. Students who struggle with a sense of their own mastery/control over their experiences might require different types of support depending on their developmental position. These students cannot necessarily be instructed to feel a greater sense of internal control over their lives if such changes require increases in ways of knowing, nor should they be discouraged from actively naming the impositions powerful social forces make on their agency.

It is also important to note that learners with higher levels of development do not necessarily report being happier individuals. Our results show no correlation—positive or negative—between the complexity of learners' ways of knowing and their "satisfaction with life." Thus, achieving a higher stage of development might afford individuals increased capacities for certain types of understanding or competence and might enable them to resist cultural values that might devalue them, but these capacities do not necessarily lead to greater happiness.

Considering how the forms of experience learners undergo in ABE/ESOL settings are filtered through developmental position offers teachers and program designers new types of awareness. However, it would be inappropriate to suggest that practitioners should be able to developmentally evaluate their students on the basis of everyday classroom interaction. There is no reliable way of assessing an individual's way of knowing without using such psychological measurements as the subject-object interview, an interview-based instrument requiring generous amounts of time and training to administer and analyze. Instead, we recommend that practitioners consider the cultures of mind lens more for its descriptive value than as a diagnostic tool. As such, this lens illustrates for practitioners the developmental diversity that likely exists in any group of students and provides an awareness of how a way of knowing may shape understanding. It suggests that practitioners might consider flexibility in program design to meet a variety of learner needs.

Orienting to similarities among learners who share a developmental mindset can help us map the larger processes of human change and growth. But in drawing educators' attention to this map, we hope not to deflect attention from our initial reason for beginning the endeavor: exploring the richness and vastness of individual and collective human experiences in learning. Thus, rather than functioning as a short-cut or substitute for attentive listening, we feel a cultures of mind lens can provide a tool helping practitioners listen more carefully and responsively, and come closer to grasping the meaning the learner assigns to the experience. Enhancing this capacity alone can have a notable impact on classrooms and teaching and help students feel recognized, understood, valued, and supported for the meanings they bring to their learning.

Functions and Purposes of ABE Education

In this section, we turn away from the ways a cultures of mind approach contributes to better understanding of how students view themselves and their lives. Now, we consider how this approach offers new insights into the ways students conceive of the programs, institutions, and larger cultures in which they participate. A critical role for developmental theory is to critique and reframe the role of education in students' lives. There are many vociferous perspectives in the ABE/ESOL literature on the validity of its current purposes and how they might be refashioned. One influential perspective construes ABE settings as contexts for the preservation of existing power systems. Our data suggest that, in addition to the other perspectives shaping these conversations, it is worth considering how learners' meaning systems affect how they perceive the tokens of power.

For example, as Socializing knowers internalize the values and messages of those they identify as authority figures or experts, they may be good candidates for induction into cultural values and norms, and they may be particularly vulnerable to the ways structural inequities in institutions and cultures might devalue or discount important aspects of their identities. However, as is the case at BHCC, students who can rely on supportive friends, parents, and teachers to mitigate the effects of these messages are often able to retain largely positive self-images. At Even Start, learners' past histories and specific features of both U.S. culture and the cultures they left influence students' friendliness to the particular values and norms implicit in the parenting curriculum. Thus, a Socializing learner such as Raquelle, who embraced the parenting values championed at Even Start, described these values as sustaining and refining values she already held.

Self-Authoring learners have the capacity to evaluate the ways institutions and cultures value them and others. They can therefore resist wholesale induction into a culture or institution and can construct critiques of the ways that these environments impinge on their ability to enact their own purposes and values. However, as Instrumental or Socializing learners have not developed the ability to generate these critiques, expecting all learners to demonstrate or quickly develop these capacities makes inappropriate demands on many students.

We recommend that teachers exercise a sense of vigilance about the developmentally driven ways students are likely to experience cultural and institutional values. Remaining aware of the potential vulnerabilities of Socializing learners while also considering the ways these vulnerabilities will vary across learners can help teachers and program developers design curricula and learning environments that properly support students and enable them to extend their capacities. We see evidence of these types of support at Even Start, where Linn struggles with competing loyalties. She wishes to support the development of her children and understands their needs as coming first. Yet Linn also feels a strong urge to develop herself, reclaim her professional identity, and expand her knowledge of the world and herself. As a Socializing knower, Linn experiences the conflict in either/or terms, whereby she must be loyal to her children's needs or to her own. However, the structure of the Even Start program enables Linn to forestall this choice as it is designed to meet both parents' and children's needs concurrently. Participation in the program helps her reconnect to her identity as a lifelong learner without jeopardizing her beliefs about the importance of her children's development.

Learners who have not yet developed Self-Authoring capacities could also be well-served by teachers, curricula, and other support services that explicitly address the cultural inequalities these students face. For example, some students at BHCC who were aware of and advised to drop classes or ask teachers questions to cope with difficulties in their learning were able to exercise these options on their own behalf.

Our developmental perspective also provides implications for the ways that ABE educators define, teach, and measure competence. Our framework helps us see that many desired skills or competencies can be performed successfully from a wide range of developmental ways of knowing, although the purposes and nature of the performance will depend on the complexity of the way of knowing. It also illustrates that appropriate goals for one student's performance will be inappropriate for another student operating with different developmental capacities. Thus, although one student may understand the importance of reading to her son every evening as a concrete step or skill she must demonstrate to be a good parent, another parent understands reading to her daughter as an opportunity to discuss with her child the values promoted by a book. Although each parent displays specific skills and behaviors, the second parent understands and perhaps performs these behaviors differently.

We imagine an awareness of different meaning systems can inform the expectations ABE/ESOL educators cast for their students. Orienting only to skill development may leave the second parent feeling she has not been supported in exploring the purposes and contexts of these skills. Asking all learners to demonstrate familiarity with the larger and more abstract values of reading to one's child may doom the first mother to feeling or being labeled incompetent. Developmentally conscious educators can account for the different ways students demonstrate competence and also scrutinize their overall program goals and individual lesson objectives for ways they might be inappropriately cueing students to perform at a certain level of complexity in the meaning system.

Practitioners can also benefit by remaining alert to the ways students' ways of knowing might also transform over the course of a program. In recognizing and welcoming ongoing forms and expressions of growth and change, teachers can support students' newly emerging identities. Educators might then consider whether one of their goals should be to help students challenge and transform their ways of knowing. While such transformations clearly are supported by the ways that teachers, curricula, and fellow students interact with each other, we suggest that practitioners would do better to see themselves as accompanying and upholding learners in this process, rather than causing it. In this monograph, we have tried to emphasize that all learners—those whose ways of knowing grow measurably more complex and those who elaborate upon their existing way of knowing—are engaged in a process of change and development. This course of motion and growth is one that all individuals have undertaken and the participants in our study had therefore already embarked upon when they entered their programs. That we witnessed such dramatic change is testament to the ways the learners continued to reconsider and reshape their lives. It is also testament to the success of the programs and teachers in joining and supporting the students in this process.

We also suggest that, in inviting development, educators should consider the potential costs as well as the gains to individual learners. Rather than imposing these expectations upon learners in the form of curricular or programmatic requirements, a necessary first step for meaningful learning depends on how well educators can meet students where they are, orienting to their existing frames of knowing. Educators might consider how they can develop goals in conversation with their students, taking into account learners' purposes and motivations for enrolling in these programs.

Finally, important forms of change can occur without transformation. At every site, learners were able to expand their understanding by incorporating new learning through their existing ways of knowing. All participants describe acquiring additional knowledge and skills in their programs, and for many, these changes resulted in modifications to the contents rather than the forms of their meaning making. Such changes are important because they can enable participants to retain a sense of coherence, increase their confidence, and amplify their personal agency.

Features of Classroom and Program Design

How educators frame the purposes of adult learning necessarily influences the formats and features of classroom and program design. With moves to formalize the purposes of adult education, such as the Clinton administration's efforts to make possible "a fully literate nation" by the year 2002 (Stein 2000), overall objectives filter down to local designs for learning, such as those crafted by program developers in the three sites we studied. Often, design choices tend to mirror larger political or philosophical debates about the purposes of learning, including, for example, that between defenders of student empowerment through use of curricula relevant for meeting the challenges of daily life versus proponents of standardized curricula that focus on skill mastery.

A developmental perspective neither favors nor condones either of these viewpoints. Instead, it suggests that student choices or preferences for their learning tend to be shaped by their developmental position. In each of our sites, adult learners shared their perspectives on what aspects of their program or classroom experiences were most helpful to them. In each setting, Instrumental students' preferences tend to coalesce around more directed, teacher-led forms of instruction whereas Self-Authoring learners tend to prefer student-led, inquiry-based forms of learning. Socializing learners prefer and benefit from program designs that assist them in understanding cultural mores and institutional expectations while connecting to peers and teachers in supportive, confidence-enhancing relationships. A straightforward implication of this finding is that adult educators might use a developmental perspective to ensure students' actual preferences are taken into account when debating the merits of different forms of instruction.

A less evident implication of this finding, but one which is supported by research with adult learners in settings beyond ESOL/ABE, is that program designers benefit from considering what Russian educational psychologist Vygotsky termed learners' "zone of proximal development." Learners are ripe for educational experiences directed to their growing edge. The "zone" describes the era of development between their current developmental position and their emerging position. The task for educators is to fashion learning experiences that consolidate current understanding while encouraging new growth. Finding this "fit" between what is and what will be in the learners' understanding is a key motivation for developmental educators. Conversely, if the learners' "zone" is either not considered or poorly assessed, learners will experience the lack of fit between their program and their needs cognitively as confusion and emotionally as a stressor. (Kegan (1994) calls the dilemma adults experience when expectations are beyond our current developmental level as being "in over our heads.") The push in adult education toward inclusion of forms of cultural critique in classroom settings is an example of an agenda well-suited for some learners but experienced as an overwhelming challenge by others.

Similarly, considerations of how to pace the introduction of new forms of thinking, such as self-reflection or critical inquiry (typically associated with the emergence of more Self-Authorizing ways of knowing), can benefit from a developmental analysis. In settings such asBHCC, where learners are entering the early stages of "higher education," development of critical thinking is an explicit goal. In such a setting, students who begin two years of study already demonstrating the Socializing way of knowing are more likely to be competent critical thinkers by the program's conclusion than are those who enter as Instrumental knowers. Program designers and teachers can better or more fairly set expectations for the time it takes to help students build higher-order thinking skills if they are aware of the developmental gains such a goal implies. As noted above, prior research in adult development cautions that it is unlikely learners will move a full position over the course of an academic year even when appropriately challenged to do so. Thus, like all adult educators, ABE/ESOL teachers and program designers may set learning goals that unwittingly require a way of knowing or "culture of mind" more complex than that of any given learners' current or emergent position. Staying aware of how these learners perceive these demands is a first step in improving the fit between learning challenge and learner capacity. A second step is actively interpreting particular educational demands through a developmental lens: What is the program or teacher demanding of students from the perspective of their current "culture of mind?"

Student-Teacher Relationships

Learners in our study informed us directly and emphatically about their preferences for the contour and character of the student–teacher relationship. In every setting, we asked how learners thought good teachers ought to teach and how they might demonstrate their concern for students' learning and well-being. Participants across sites who shared a developmental position consistently identified similar aspects of the student–teacher relationship as critical or advisable. Our findings suggest that, like Instrumental knowers in other adult learning settings, those in our study express strong preferences for teachers who convey clearly and with careful specificity their expectations of students as well as the content of a set of discrete, predetermined, teacher-led lessons. They prefer teachers who model excellence and provide explicit guidelines for acceptable work. Clear standards are equated with demonstrated authority, which is both desirable and reassuring. Instrumental learners in our study feel ill at ease with teachers who raise questions about the nature of knowledge or who request student commentary on possible alternatives to authority's point of view.

Instrumental learners in each of our sites view teachers as resources who can help them make progress toward their learning goals. Our findings suggest these learners feel supported and cared for when teachers structure the learning experience, provide rewards for evident progress, and transmit bodies of relevant knowledge with certainty and authority while supporting skill development.

We find that Socializing learners across sites prefer teachers who coax them to express their understanding as it becomes consolidated. Like Instrumental knowers, they also appreciate teaching methods that build their skills (especially around language proficiency). They also look for teachers who will help them broaden their own goals, confirm their sense of competence, and reach out with personal warmth as advocates and champions of their success. These learners in our study feel supported when teachers make a personal investment in their development.

Few participants in our study demonstrate a Self-Authoring way of knowing. Those who do echo the expectations of adult learners in prior research. They look for teachers who help actively construct a learning community in which multiple perspectives on an issue, concept, or academic discipline are engaged and valued. They use teacher critiques to inform and shape their own performance standards. We also find that these learners use the processes of education to hone their evaluations of the norms and values of their cultures of origin and adopted culture. They appreciate teachers who can engage with them in their discovery of their own capacities and the re-creation of their identities.

A developmental approach oriented to learners' different meaning systems informs the differing criteria students will bring to their preferred teaching processes and personal and professional qualities of teachers. For teachers who aim to extend themselves to the broadest possible range of students, a developmental perspective can lend meaning to potentially puzzling differences in student responses to the teacher's practice and presence. It may serve to build tolerance for these differences and point to possibilities for enhancing flexibility in teachers' styles. It can also help teachers gauge how students accustomed to other forms of pedagogy might receive innovations in their practice.

Importance of a Learner Cohort

Learners at all three sites described their experiences working collaboratively with cohort members as academically and emotionally beneficial. As with other aspects of their classroom experiences, students who share a developmental position reported similar perceptions of how their peers enhanced their learning and emotional well-being. Learners operating with Instrumental ways of understanding described how collaborative learning activities helped them achieve concrete goals such as identifying valuable practical strategies for learning and problem solving, arriving at the correct answer, improving their communication skills, experiencing comradeship, and developing new respect for their own and others' ideas. In addition to these features, Socializing learners also describe additional social and emotional benefits of collaborative learning, including feeling more comfortable asking questions and less afraid to speak English in front of others. The sense of care and connection these learners experience is important in how they understand and are understood by others. Collaborative activities help these learners attune to each other's feelings and experiences, improving their opportunities to develop mutually empathic relationships. Self-Authoring learners describe the ways the varying perspectives of their peers enhance their learning and teaching processes. They appreciate their peer group's intellectual and cultural diversity and may seek out differences of opinion, culture, and experience instead of finding comfort in similarity and sameness. These learners use the other students' ideas and feelings to further their self-understanding, social support, and self-expansion.

These findings suggest several implications for educators about the benefits of creating opportunities for students to work in groups. The first will ring true for many practitioners who already know that collaborative learning experiences hold the potential for giving learners valuable means of academic and emotional support. We also see these types of learning as offering opportunities for students to reconsider aspects of their knowing. In sharing and negotiating with their peers, students may also experience important forms of challenge to their existing ideas and even their existing ways of knowing.

Furthermore, the differences in the ways students understand these experiences indicate that any one model of collaborative learning may not adequately attend to all students' learning needs. As described in the Polaroid chapter, three different models in the collaborative learning literature correspond to the three ways of knowing Polaroid learners demonstrate. Depending on their developmental capacity, some students oriented to the goals of more than one of the models. If classrooms generally contain the diversity across ways of knowing evidenced in each site in our study, teachers who use one model of collaborative learning at the expense of the others are likely to leave some learners feeling frustrated or unchallenged. Instead, we recommend that teachers incorporate elements of each of the three models into their practice to allow all learners in a classroom to find features of support and challenge.

Overall, our research responds to the call for further meaning-centered explorations of the ABE experience, invoking the need for rich and theory-*complicating* rather than theory-*confirming* sources of data. Such explorations aid us in conceptualizing the functions and purposes of ABE education in ways consistent with the multifaceted and sometimes contradictory perspectives' of the participants themselves.

Our study is informed by both our developmental orientation and characteristic debates in ABE around the fundamental purposes of (and approaches to) adult basic education. These debates are necessarily polarized; advocates for a focus on basic skill-building in support of workforce preparation are likely to be at odds with those who champion an emancipatory approach to curricular reform centered around the development of an empowered, critically-conscious citizenry.

Among learners in our study, however, we encountered more nuanced and relativized perspectives. Some of our participants described wanting to build skills to become more effective advocates for their school-aged children, and others desired greater self-awareness so that they might more generously and substantively contribute to their work team. Our learners, in short, did not sound like theorists, policymakers, or practitioners. They talked like people in the midst of making meaning of ongoing, complex, vital, purposeful, and surprising experiences. We took pains to capture their sensibilities over time and through multiple modalities of data collection because the emergence of these meanings is of greatest interest and importance to us. In essence, we took up the call for learner-centered qualitative explorations because we perceive that the boldest evolution of theory, policy, and practice in ABE will come from closely attending to the articulated yearnings of its constituents. Because learners' meanings are expressed not in service of a dedicated (and therefore entrenched) position but as an active reflection on real experience, theorists, policymakers, and practitioners can respectfully draw from their pool of knowledge to shape recommendations for new directions in the field.

Our work focused primarily on the understandings of learners. We urge researchers in the field to expand on our work to consider closely also the meaning-making of teachers in ABE settings, who, like learners, typically encounter barriers to their capacities to act in ways they find effective and professionally satisfying. Active debates over directions for teacher development, teacher socialization, and the professionalization of the field would benefit from richer understandings of teachers' preferences for their own learning. Under-resourced, under-compensated, and often under-appreciated, teachers—like learners in ABE settings—face issues of social and economic marginalization. Like learners, some teachers find ways to work successfully in the context of considerable constraints. By studying effective teachers and exploring their meaning making, we might identify aspects of professionalism associated with success *in spite of* constraints and *in the midst of* the slow process of systematic reform.

Final Note

One criticism of developmental psychology in general is that it tends not to account for context when describing or explaining how personal meanings come into being. Because the nature of its primary forms of analysis are "structural"—attending to the logic of how people make sense more than the content of their sense-making—context tends to be underplayed. The earlier successes of developmental perspectives in raising school teachers' awareness of persistent interpretations children make of the natural world, moral dilemmas, or social interactions, are due largely to the convenient consistencies of the school environment. Schools are normative environments in which the expectations are spelled out, the goals for learning are clear, and the behaviors expected of children are well understood by the adults who shape the learning experience. In essence, the context is well defined and shared.

One of the difficulties of taking developmental frameworks to the study of adult learners rests with the reality that as adulthood progresses, shared contexts become rarer—adults typically have choice in the roles they take on and their learning activities, which vary greatly and reflect personal as well as institutional goals. When the adults studied also come from very different backgrounds and are engaged in a broad variety of learning experiences, the differences begin to rightly outweigh the similarities. The challenges to a developmental perspective presented by this study were thus weighty and exhaustive. Finding any consistencies in the meaning systems of 41 learners across three settings who report very different personal backgrounds, countries of origin, and histories of educational experiences was, in short, unlikely.

The evidence, however, suggests that a developmental framework at the very least helps organize our understanding of the different experiences of learners, their educational goals and aims, and the concomitant experiences of teachers in classrooms who intend to make their learning a sustained possibility. The extensive attention paid throughout this report to learners' meaning making is facilitated, we believe, by the systematic methods developmental theory provides for attending to the developmental differences in adult learners' understandings.

At best, a cultures of mind approach also recognizes the significance of individuals' *similarities* in meaning-making, despite important influences of culture, language, social role, and even era of the lifespan. In a period of our own advance as a culture in which articulation and appreciation of difference represents an important marker of social evolution, it feels intellectually awkward to emphasize the rich understanding of the similar. Yet learners in this study who share a developmental position also share a loyalty and adherence to a way of making meaning that is the product of their own persistent engagement with the struggle to know. The consistencies apparent in these ways of knowing do not dilute their importance or the extent of their influence on learners' experiences.

In part, the implications of our study's findings will be worked out in practice and future policy debates as adult education stakeholders lay claim to them, either to support their own legitimate purposes or unseat rival claims to legitimacy. As developmental psychologists, educators, and now champions ourselves of the profoundly ennobling project that is adult basic education, we invite readers into conversation with us.

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APPENDIX A

Standardized Measures Analysis Report

To answer research questions concerning the degree of self-change the participants reported or demonstrated, we collected a range of demographic data and also scored the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) and three standardized measures of psychological status. Participants' scores on these standardized measures—the Satisfaction with Life scale (SWL), the Personal Efficacy Beliefs Scale (PEBS), and the Locus of Control scale (LOC)—were specifically intended to help us find and describe changes in participants' overall satisfaction and confidence as they engaged in the programs we studied, using widely accepted measures of these variables. Using a variety of appropriate statistical techniques (primarily simple and multiple regression analyses), we analyzed the numerical, demographic, and psychological data we collected, looking for statistically significant differences in the populations at our three sites and correlational relationships among the demographic, paper and pencil, and developmental variables. This section presents our methods and our findings concerning these quantitative analyses.

The Variables

Research on adult development persistently reports a positive association between participants' years of education and the demonstration of higher-stage reasoning. A variety of studies have also looked at the relationship between gender and adult development, with contradictory reports (using a variety of methods) linking either gender to higher-stage cognitive or moral reasoning. Also, several studies have suggested provocative relationships between SES status overall and level of development across several domains of adult life (e.g., work, parenting, interpersonal relationships). To support our exploration of the important relationships among key demographic variables and developmental stage and also to pursue questions on the relationship of other variables to life satisfaction and locus of control, at our initial visit to each site, we gathered a variety of demographic information about our participants. These include Age at First Visit, Gender, Marital Status, Number of Children, ESOL Status, Years in the United States, Years of Own Education, Years of Mother's Education, and Years of Father's Education.

Because we were unsure which relationships among parents' education and success might matter most, we also created and tested variables for **Years of Best- Educated Parent's Education** and **Years of Same-Gender Parent's Education**. Because we thought there might be relationships among variables that depended more on whether or not a participant *was* a parent than incrementally on number of children, we also created a dichotomous variable for **Parental Status**.

In addition to these purely demographic variables, we also attended to variables related to the program that participants were in, specifically the **Site** itself, and **Months Already in the Program** at first visit. Finally, we administered the Subject-Object Interview (**SOI**) (Lahey, Souvaine, Kegan, Goodman & Felix, 1988), and the three paper and pencil measures—**PEBS**, **SWL**, and **LOC**—at both our initial and final visits and created derived variables for changes in scores for these variables. These derived variables represent simply the differences between time one and time last scores on each measure.

As our analysis would use regression tools that relied on more or less normal, linear distributions of variables, we examined these distributions for all of our variables. We found all but two of the variables to be normally distributed. These two—**Years in the United States**, and **Number of Children**—were positively skewed. To adjust for the unreliability of our measures of central tendency and to address potential problems with our regression analyses, we transformed them using a logarithmic transformation adjusted to avoid undefined values (LOG(1+*RawValue*)), conducted our analyses with these transformed variables, and then untransformed them ((10^*TransformedValue*)–1) to report our results.

Table 1 reports means, standard deviations, medians, and number of participants contributing to these (N) for each of the demographic variables, both within each site and overall. Notice that the reported standard deviations for our transformed variables are substantially lower than those for the raw variables, indicating that this procedure served to linearize these variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables

	Polaroid				Evenstart				BHCC				Overall			
Variable	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**
Site				18				20				17				55
Age	41.94	7.58	44.00	17	32.67	6.14	33.00	18	25.15	6.62	24.00	13	33.92	9.46	33.00	48
% Female	0.50	0.51	0.50	18	0.70	0.47	1.00	20	0.59	0.51	1.00	17	0.60	0.49	1.00	55
Marital status		.12 single .65 married .24 divorced				.055 single .90 married .055 divorced				.86 single .14 married				.3 single .6 married .1 divorced		
Number of Children	2.59	1.66	3.00	17	2.95	1.90	3.00	19	0.00	0.00	0.00	14	2.00	1.96	2.00	50
# Children (transfrmd)	1.96	.85	2.46	17	2.38	.66	2.46	19	0	0	0	14	1.22	1.03	1.00	50
% Parents	0.88	0.33	1.00	17	1.00	0.00	1.00	19	0.00	0.00	0.00	14	0.68	0.47	1.00	50
Years in the U.S.	21.12	12.09	18.00	17	10.11	7.25	9.00	19	3.14	3.90	2.00	14	11.90	11.12	10.50	50
Years in the U.S. (transfrmd)	15.13	1.48	17.50	17	6.64	1.62	9.00	19	1.70	1.04	2.00	14	6.07	2.07	9.00	50
Years Own Ed	9.47	3.74	10.00	17	9.53	3.59	10.00	17	12.21	2.15	12.00	14	10.29	3.46	11.00	48
% ESOL	0.76	0.44	1.00	17	0.82	0.40	1.00	11	1.00	0.00	1.00	14	0.86	0.35	1.00	42
Mos Pgm	NA	NA	NA	0	19.74	17.42	13.00	19	9.29	7.56	7.50	14	15.30	14.88	10.00	33
Mother Ed	4.19	3.75	5.00	16	3.71	6.16	0.00	7	9.00	5.96	8.00	13	5.83	5.53	5.00	36
Father Ed	7.50	3.98	5.00	16	5.86	5.46	5.00	7	10.83	5.36	12.00	12	8.31	5.03	7.00	35
Most Parent's Ed	7.63	4.00	5.00	16	7.13	6.20	6.00	8	11.00	5.48	12.00	13	8.70	5.21	8.00	37
Same Gender Parent Ed	6.19	4.29	5.00	16	5.50	5.55	6.00	8	9.42	6.43	8.50	12	7.11	5.47	5.50	36

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As reported in the main body of the monograph, clear differences in mean age across sites are evident, with participants in the Polaroid site representing the oldest group on average and the learners at the BHCC site the youngest. No participants at BHCC report having children.

Reliability Analysis

In administering the paper and pencil measures with a population for whom English is not generally their primary language, we found ourselves unsure whether participants accurately and consistently understood the questions that make up these measures. Thus, we had doubts about whether the measures would be sufficiently reliable—whether participants' answers would be sufficiently robust—to be used at all. Therefore, we began with an analysis of the reliability of the measures themselves with this population before undertaking the more substantive correlational and longitudinal analyses.

The Personal Efficacy Beliefs Scale (PEBS) is a 10-item measure of self-efficacy (Riggs, Warka, Babasa, Betancourt & Hooker, 1994); the Locus of Control (LOC) scale is a seven-item measure of locus of control; and the Satisfaction With Life scale (SWL) is a five-item measure of general life satisfaction (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; Pavot, Diener, Colvin, & Sandvik, 1991). These measures were administered at the first and last data collection visits at each of the three sites. At Even Start for both visits, and at BHCC for the final visit, we also extended the SWL by doubling and modifying each of the original questions to address satisfaction with the primary role of interest (parent, student), yielding a 10-item scale that really consisted of two parallel subscales, SWLife and SWRole, though the SWRole scale proved unsatisfactory, as described below.

In the published versions of each of these scales, responses are to be on a seven-point Likert type scale, but we found after administering these at the Polaroid site that this complex scale seemed too difficult to understand for the limited English proficient participants, so we changed the response format to a five-point Likert type scale at Even Start and BHCC for both data collection visits. In addition, we included graphics on the scale to help participants understand the meaning of the ratings. Having used a seven-point format at Polaroid at the initial visit, we kept it for the final visit.

Method

The reliability analysis for these scales consisted of several steps:

1) We entered and then cleaned the data by data re-orienting responses when questions were phrased in the negative[1]; converting responses on the seven-point scale at Polaroid to a five-point format so that data across all three sites could be used in the same analysis[2]; separating out the SWLife and SWRole scales; and dealing with missing values or values participants entered mistakenly.

2) We calculated the Cronbach α statistic for each scale at each administration. This measures the correlation between participants' responses on each item and the total of the other items on that scale. It is a measure of internal consistency of the measure in that each item on the scale is supposed to contribute positively to the overall score on that measure so they should all be positively and highly correlated. We compared these statistics both with the published values for each measure (all > .8) and with general guidelines for what counts as a reasonable value for these statistics (≥ .6).

3) We also examined whether the Cronbach α statistic would increase or decrease upon the deletion of each item in the measure—again, if excluding an item would increase the consistency of the remaining items, one could argue it should be excluded to make the measure more robust. In our case, this argument needed to be balanced against the desire to remain true to the original scales (see below for results of this procedure).

4) Finally, we created composite scores by summing all the included items and dividing by the number of items. This method standardizes the scores to be consistent with the original 1 to 5 Likert scale so scores can be compared across sites and administrations.

Results and item deletion analysis

The following chart was used to evaluate the internal reliability of the measures using the Cronbach α statistic. It also lists how the a statistic would change upon deletion of the least correlated item and notes that item.

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[1] PEBS questions 1, 5, 7, & 9; LOC questions 1, 2, 3, 5, & 7.

[2] This yields seven possible responses distributed across the five-point range, viz. at 1, 1.66, 2.33, 3, 3.66, 4.33, and 5.

Time	Scale	Cronbach α	N	Proposed deletion	α on deletion
Initial	SWLife	.510	50	8	.584
Final	SWLife	.630	31	10	.761
Initial	SWRole	-.300	11		
Final	SWRole	.353	18	9	.667
Initial	LOC	.352	50	2	.450
Final	LOC	.600	37	6	.625
Initial	PEBS	.654	51	7	.669
Final	PEBS	.728	31	9	.747

Using this chart, we made decisions about item deletion, considering and balancing: 1) Could the measure as it stood be sufficiently reliable to use even if its reliability could be increased by item deletion? If so, it seemed advantageous to leave the measures as published. 2) How much of an increase in reliability would item deletion yield? If the increase was small, again it seemed better to leave the measure as published rather than modifying it.

For criterion #1, we decided that an α value greater than or equal to .6 was sufficiently robust not to alter the measure. The PEBS at both administrations, the LOC at the final administration, and the SWLife scale at the final administration fit this criterion, so we let them stand with all of their items included in the composite score. It could be argued that the dramatic increase in α (an increase of .13) upon the elimination of item 10 in the final SWLife makes such an elimination a reasonable choice; however, we chose not to do so.

Difficulties with our initial administration of our constructed SWRole scale raised our concerns about its reliability. We made the conservative decision to eliminate it as a measure for the study. Although the final administration of this measure could be made reliable by deleting item 9, we decided to drop this measure as well, both because it was not administered across all three sites and because of the lack of a longitudinal comparison score.

Deleting item 8 from the initial administration of the SWLife measure produces a substantial (.074) increase in α and a modified measure that is sufficiently reliable to use. Although the reliability estimate, at .584, is not quite up to our .60 criterion, no further item deletions would increase the internal reliability at all, so we settled on this measure with just item 8 deleted.

Deleting item 2 from the initial administration of the LOC measure also yields a substantial (.118) increase in α, but the modified measure is not yet sufficiently reliable to use (α = .45). However, no further item deletions would increase the internal reliability at all so we had to settle with deleting item 2 and a much less than ideal internal reliability of .45. However, the relative unreliability of this measure at this administration must be considered as we examine the meaning of our correlational results.

Summary of reliability analysis

We conducted a Cronbach α test of reliability on the paper and pencil measures used in this study and found that though these estimates are lower than the published values, the measures are sufficiently reliable to be used as is in all of their final administrations and for the PEBS, also in its initial administration.

By deleting uncorrelated items from the SWLife scale in its initial administration, this scale can also be made sufficiently reliable to use in further analyses. A similar effort with the initial administration of the LOC scale leaves more ambiguous results. The SWRole scale, constructed for this project, cannot be so adjusted in its initial administration, and therefore, we dropped it from the study.

Although we will examine differences in these scores across administrations and sites, notice that the Cronbach α reliability values consistently go up across administrations of the same scale. This may serve as one kind of evidence of the increasing linguistic competence of the participants as they were increasingly able as a group to understand the language underlying these questions and thus, better able to respond consistently and reliably.

Distribution of Psychological Variables

Having checked on the reliability of these measures, we examined their distribution before turning to relationships among these many variables. Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, median, and associated N for the three paper and pencil measures—LOC, PEB, and SWL—and the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) scores. For each measure, statistics are listed for both the initial and final data collection visits, as well as for a derived change in score variable computed by subtracting initial from final score. We also checked the distributional characteristics of these variables and found them all to be normally, linearly distributed.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Variables

	Polaroid				Evenstart				BHCC				Overall			
Variable	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**	**Mean**	**σ**	**Median**	**N**
SOI Initial	2.73	0.55	2.50	15	2.94	0.47	3.00	19	3.08	0.33	3.00	16	2.92	0.47	3.00	50
SOI Final	2.86	0.54	2.60	17	2.99	0.40	3.00	14	3.03	0.42	3.00	10	2.95	0.46	3.00	41
SOI Chng	0.13	0.24	0.10	15	0.01	0.09	0.00	14	-0.07	0.19	0.00	9	0.04	0.20	0.00	38
LOC Initial	3.26	0.53	3.11	16	3.62	0.66	3.67	17	3.58	0.66	3.50	17	3.49	0.63	3.50	50
LOC Final	3.65	0.78	3.48	17	3.81	0.66	3.86	12	3.64	0.50	3.50	8	3.70	0.68	3.57	37
LOC Chng	0.32	0.93	0.11	15	0.20	1.08	0.13	12	-0.15	0.36	-0.10	8	0.17	0.89	0.00	35
PEB Initial	3.81	0.72	3.73	17	3.92	0.38	3.80	17	3.78	0.53	3.70	17	3.84	0.55	3.73	51
PEB Final	4.33	0.59	4.47	17	4.10	0.55	4.00	12	3.91	0.57	3.75	8	4.16	0.58	4.00	37
PEB Chng	0.54	0.53	0.33	16	0.12	0.75	0.00	12	-0.15	0.60	-0.15	8	0.27	0.69	0.14	36
SWL Initial	3.45	0.87	3.53	16	3.41	0.67	3.60	17	2.93	0.66	3.20	17	3.26	0.68	3.23	50
SWL Final	3.77	0.97	3.93	17	3.73	0.54	3.80	12	3.38	0.45	3.30	8	3.70	0.75	3.80	36
SWL Chng	0.20	1.15	0.40	15	0.38	1.03	0.18	12	0.33	0.72	0.30	8	0.31	0.95	0.47	34

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Site Specific Differences

Having examined the distributions of these variables both overall and at each of the sites, we then explored whether differences among sites were statistically significant. We found differences among the sites in several of the demographic and psychological variables—some at the level traditionally considered statistically significant (pΔ.05—listed in **bold**) and some bordering on this level (.05<pΔ.10). In Table 3, we list site specific averages, the value of the F test and its degrees of freedom, the associated p value, and the value of R^2 (it ranges from 0 to 1). Thus, 1/2 the variation in Age can be predicted merely by knowing a student's site.

Table 3: Site Specific Differences in Demographic Variables

Variable	Polaroid average	Evenstart average	BHCC average	F	df	P value	R^2
Age	41.9	32.6	25.1	**22.89**	**2, 46**	**.0001**	.50
Years in the U.S. (direct average)	21.1	10.1	3.1	**17.41**	**2, 48**	**.0001**	.43
Years in U.S. (transformed)	18.0	7.5	2.3	**25.24**	**2, 48**	**.0001**	.50
Own Education in years	9.5	9.5	12.2	**3.35**	**2, 48**	**.044**	.13
Mother's Education in years	4.2	3.7	9.0	**3.92**	**2, 36**	**.030**	.19
Father's Education in years	7.5	5.9	10.8	2.82	2, 33	.075	.15
# Kids (direct average)	2.6	2.9	0	**17.01**	**2, 48**	**.0001**	.42
# Kids (transformed)	2.2	2.6	0	**13.89**	**2, 48**	**.0001**	.64
Parent status	88%	100%	0%	**121.39**	**2, 48**	**.0001**	.73

Thus, as noted above, students at BHCC are, on average, younger and more recently arrived in the United States, have no children, and have more years of education themselves as do both their parents. This differs significantly from both the other sites. At Polaroid as well, students are, on average, older, have been in the United States longer, and have slightly better educated fathers than students at Even Start. There are no statistically significant differences by site in Gender or ESOL status.[3] Because marital status has three possible values at each of the three sites, we conducted a chi-square test to determine that marital status does, indeed, differ significantly by site (χ^2=32.9, df=4, p<.0001). Again, the difference here is primarily that BHCC students are generally single, and that is rare for students at the other sites.

There are also a few site-specific differences in the psychological variables we measured, or their derivatives. These are displayed in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Site Specific Differences in Psychological Variables

Variable	Polaroid average	Evenstart average	BHCC average	F	df	P value	R^2
Change in Efficacy score	.50	-.02	-.15	2.82	2, 34	.070	.20
Change in SOI score	.13	.01	-.07	**3.50**	**2, 35**	**.041**	.17
ΔSOI w/o outlying POL stdt	.09	.01	-.07	2.97	2, 34	.065	.15

Thus, students at Polaroid had, on average, higher increases in both their PEBS scores and in their SOI score over the time we studied them. Examining these results, it seemed that increases in SOI score might be attributable to a single Polaroid student's substantial increase in SOI score from initial to final time. However, removing this student from the data set (last line in Table 4) we still find a strong and nearly statistically significant relationship between Δ SOI and site.

Though these differences are small, they *are* statistically significant or nearly so and it is worth asking what characteristics of the Polaroid program over the time period studied in comparison with the other sites led to these changes in efficacy and constructive-developmental level? Was it just that we studied Polaroid students over a longer time period than the other sites? Or did something about the program itself that promote both Efficacy Beliefs and the development of cognitive complexity?

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[3] For the purposes of our analysis, ESOL status is defined as a binary variable.

Demographic Predictors of Psychological Variables

By fitting simple and multiple regression models, we explored what demographic variables might predict SOI or other paper and pencil measures. Many that we would expect to do not, even controlling for differences by site. Thus, Years of Own Education, Age, and Years in the United States fail to predict initial SOI scores, nor does Gender or Marital status. Most years of parents' education does not predict SOI, nor does Years of Father's Education, though Years of Mother's Education does with coefficients that are borderline in their statistical significance ($p=.065$, $R^2=.112$).

$$\textit{Initial SOI} = 2.73 + .032\ \textit{Mother's Education}$$

This means that each additional year of a student's Mother's Education is associated with an SOI score that is .032 higher. The relationship between SOI and Mother's Education (and not Father's Education or Same-gender parent's education or Most parents' education) is interesting. Does mother's education still mean something about the value of education in a family? And how would that be associated with increased SOI scores?

In our data set, parent status also predicts initial SOI, with parents, on average, seeming to have less cognitive complexity than non-parents. This, however, turns out to be an anomaly of the distributional characteristics of our data (all parents at Even Start, no parents at BHCC, and just a few non-parents with higher SOI scores at Polaroid), so we've ruled out any generalization to a larger population for this non-intuitive result. There are no other statistically significant relationships between demographic variables and any of the psychological variables.

Psychological Variables Predicting SOI

We began by examining how the paper and pencil measures might be correlated with SOI scores. Again, we fitted several simple and multiple regression models, looking for those with statistically significant values both for the overall equation (F statistic) and for each of the individual regression coefficients. When a variable is statistically significant in a multiple regression model, it means that it contributes to the predictive power of the model even after controlling for the other variables in the model.

Table 5 lists regression coefficients for the several statistically significant or borderline significant models relating initial scores on psychological variables and site to initial SOI score. The coefficients from the table can be interpreted, when present, as filling in for coefficients in equations of the form:

$$\textit{InitialSOI} = \text{Intercept} + \text{A} \times \textit{InitialSWL} + \text{B} \times \textit{InitialLOC} + \text{C} \times \textit{BHCC} + \text{D} \times \textit{EVST}$$

There are two dichotomous site variables, always entered together—BHCC indicating a student is at BHCC, and EVST indicating that a student is at Even Start. The Polaroid site does not have a separate variable because it is described by those who are neither BHCC nor EVST.

Table 5: Predicting Initial SOI by Other Psychological Variables and Site

		A	B	C	D				
Model	**Intercept**	**SWL Initial**	**LOC Initial**	**BHCC**	**EVST**	**F statistic**	**p**	**Df**	**R^2**
I	3.42	–.147 ~				3.22	.080	1, 43	.070
II	3.08	–.113		.317 ~	.307 ~	2.66	.063	3, 41	.161
III	2.17		.220 *			**4.28**	**.045**	1, 41	.095
IV	2.14		.168	.328 ~	.267	2.82	.051	3, 39	.178
V	2.65	–.163 *	.232 *			**4.31**	**.020**	2, 40	.177
VI	2.57	–.139	.185 ~	.241	.258	**2.86**	**.036**	4, 38	.231

Note: ~ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$; **** $p \leq .0001$

The next to last of these models—Model V—is best not only because it is statistically significant overall, but also because all the coefficients are also statistically significant.[4] This means that together, Initial SWL and Initial LOC predict Initial SOI better than each does separately and better than they do while also controlling for site specific differences in SOI. The equation for this model is

$$\textit{InitialSOI} = 2.65 + (-.163) \times \textit{InitialSWL} + .232 \times \textit{InitialLOC}$$

This model says that higher LOC scores are associated with higher SOI scores at constant levels of SWL, but also that higher SWL scores are associated with *lower* SOI scores at constant levels of LOC. Although it is consistent with constructive-developmental theory to say higher SOI scores are associated with higher Locus of Control scores—the SOI measures, in part, where a person locates authority—what does it mean to say that higher SOI is associated with lower scores on the

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[4] A comparison of Models V and VI shows that jointly adding the site related variables yields a model (VI) that is not statistically significantly different from V, which does not include these variables (F=1.33, df=2,38, p=.28).

Satisfaction with Life scale? It could be that this finding is also an artifact of the particular distributions within our populations, especially as we found this relationship is strongest within the Polaroid site.[5]

Relationships with Final SOI

We can further explore the robustness of these relationships by trying to find similar patterns at our final data collection visit. Although it did not make sense to predict Initial SOI from scores at our final data collection visit, the converse is not true for Final SOI scores—looking for predictors of Final SOI from the initial visit is consistent with our theoretical approach. Not surprisingly, we find Initial SOI to be a very strong predictor of Final SOI (Model VII in Table 6). Constructive-developmental level does not, prior research suggests, change much over the relatively short timeframes studied here.

As we investigated other such relationships, we found one person had anomalous scores at our final data collection visit, masking relationships otherwise apparent within the data. This participant had the lowest Locus of Control (LOC) (2.3) and change in LOC (-2.2) scores, and the second lowest Efficacy (PEBS) score (3.3) and the lowest change in PEBS score (-1.2). Relationships between Final SOI and LOC are not statistically significant if we include her but they are significant if we exclude her. Thus, in our analyses, we have chosen to exclude her anomalous data.[6]

Table 6: Predicting Final SOI by Other Psychological Variables

Model	Intercept	SOI Initial	LOC Final	F statistic	p	df	R^2
VII	.30	.912 ****		167.22	.0001	1, 36	.823
VIII	1.93		.256 *	6.14	.020	1, 27	.185

Note: ~ p≤.10; * p≤.05; ** p≤.01; *** p≤.001; **** p≤.0001

Other models predicting Final SOI by SWL, PEBS, and Site individually or in combination with each other and LOC are not statistically significantly different from the null hypothesis that all parameter estimates are 0. (i.e., they are no better than simply using average values for predicting SOI scores.) Notice that the parameter estimates for Model VIII are similar to those for Models III and V and state, again, that higher LOC scores are associated with higher SOI scores at our final data collection visit. Interestingly, the difficult-to-explain negative association with Satisfaction with Life that we found at our initial visit no longer holds true.

We also explored relationships between changes over time in students' scores on the paper and pencil measures and changes in SOI scores and found no statistically significant relationships. Thus, even though a higher LOC score is associated with higher SOI scores at both data collection visits, *increases* in LOC over time are not associated with *increases* in SOI. This may mostly be because SOI changed so little, though it may also be that LOC does not change smoothly in the process of development.

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[5] How do we make sense of this finding? The relationships identified here are not causal. It is not that higher levels of cognitive complexity do not lead to lower life satisfaction, or vice versa. At the same time, one could invent a rationale for either of these claims—e.g., that lower life satisfaction drives people towards developmental change as measured by the SOI; or that those with higher cognitive complexity - especially in an environment that does not particularly support it - can find themselves less satisfied with their lives. Such hypotheses, while provocative, would need further investigation and exploration to be sustained.

[6] In the main text, we explore sources of the unusual difference in this learner's experiences.

In the end, we found a strong relationship between measures of SOI across time, as expected by Kegan's theory, and a consistent relationship between SOI and LOC. Because the relationship between SOI and SWL does not stand up over time, we can cautiously rule it out as an aberrant finding.

Psychological Variables Predicting Each Other

We then examined relationships among the psychological variables measured by the paper and pencil measures. One interesting general finding was that scores on any particular measure from our initial data collection visit do not predict scores on the same measure for our final data collection visit. People seem to change– and change in both directions– on these measures.

However, *Change* in each of the paper and pencil measures is strongly negatively predicted by initial values, as shown in Table 7. For LOC and PEBS, analyses are shown both with and without the aberrant data of one participant. Understanding the relationship described here is complex. Although a regression equation with a negative coefficient for the main effect (as seen in all of these examples) might seem to imply that those with higher scores initially were likely to have their scores go down and vice versa, factoring in the intercept gives a slightly different picture.

Table 7: Predicting Change in Psychological Variables by Initial Values

Model	**Dependent variable**	**Intercept**	**SWL Initial**	**LOC Initial**	**PEBS Initial**	**F statistic**	**p**	**df**	R^2	**Notes**
IX	Δ SWL	3.41	–.928 ***			**35.80**	**.0001**	1, 27	.570	
X	Δ LOC	3.39		–.917 ***		**27.45**	**.0001**	1, 25	.523	
XI	Δ LOC	3.00		–.792 ***		**24.38**	**.0001**	1, 24	.504	No Ak
XII	Δ PEBS	3.00			–.729 ***	**15.04**	**.0007**	1, 25	.376	
XIII	Δ PEBS	2.76			–.657 **	**12.95**	**.0014**	1, 24	.351	No Ak

Note: ~ p≤.10; * p≤.05; ** p≤.01; *** p≤.001; **** p≤.0001

For example, take the equation concerning Change in SWL scores:

$$\Delta SWL = 3.41 - .928 \text{ x } InitialSWL$$

We can use this formula to calculate predicted values for Δ SWL at different values of Initial SWL. In this data set, the minimum Initial SWL is 1.5, and at this value the average change in SWL is predicted to be an increase of 2.0 points. For each additional point of Initial SWL score, the average *increase* in SWL will be .93 points smaller. At an Initial SWL of 3.7, the predicted increase in SWL would be zero and at higher values of Initial SWL predicted change in SWL would be negative. When Initial SWL is at its maximum of 5, SWL is predicted to decrease by 1.2 points. So, the average values predicted from the initial range of 1 to 5 is the much smaller range of 3.5 to 3.8, and at its average initial value (3.26), SWL is predicted to increase by .38.

Thus what we see here is a combination of an overall average increase in SWL, combined with a robust "regression to the mean" whereby, when things vary randomly, unusually high or low values are likely to be more middling the next time they're measured. A similar pattern can be seen with each of the other change variables.

Multiple regression analyses were also conducted to examine whether these relationships varied by site. No statistically significant relationship was found between Site and Δ SWL or Δ LOC, nor did adding a set of Site variables contribute to the predictive power of Models IX through XI. On the other hand, Δ PEBS can be predicted by Site at a nearly significant level (Model XIV in Table 8), and thus we also examined whether adding variables for Site to the Initial PEBS variable could make a more robust model (compare Models XV and XVI with Models XII and XIII).

Table 8: Predicting Change in Efficacy by Site

Model	Dependent variable	Intercept	PEBS Initial	BHCC	EVST	F statistic	p	df	R^2	Notes
XIV	Δ PEBS	.500		–.650 *	–.375	3.00	.069	2, 23	.207	No Ak
XV	Δ PEBS	2.92	–.640 **	–.465 ~	–.377	**6.86**	**.002**	3, 23	.472	
XVI	Δ PEBS	2.66	–.573 **	–.484 *	–.281	**6.24**	**.003**	3, 22	.460	No Ak

Note: ~ p≤.10; * p≤.05; ** p≤.01; *** p≤.001; **** p≤.0001

Though it appears the coefficient for the BHCC variable is statistically significant, the Site variable necessarily involves the addition of both the BHCC and EVST variables, and conducting a hypothesis test that checks the significance of adding both of them together to the model finds that their contribution is not statistically significantly different from the null hypothesis that these coefficients are zero (0).[7] Thus, our best models for predicting Δ PEBS are Models XII and XIII.

Finally, we examined relationships among different paper and pencil measures and found a few interesting results—one among variables at our initial data collection visit, and several at our final data collection visit.

Specifically, we found that Initial LOC scores are predicted by Initial PEBS scores. Higher PEBS scores are associated with higher LOC scores, with coefficients described in Table 9. However, no other variables show a statistically significant relationship at our initial data collection visit, nor does the addition of Site variables change these results.

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[7] The ΔF test comparing Models XII and XV yields F=2.10, df=2,23, p=.145. The ΔF test comparing models XIII and XVI yields F=2.23, df=2, 22, p=.132.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients for Relationships Among Different P&P Measures at Initial Visit

Model	Dependent variable	Intercept	PEBS Initial	F statistic	p	R^2	df	Notes
XVII	Initial LOC	1.27	.58 ***	**14.77**	**.0004**	.247	1, 45	

At our final visit, we find relationships among all three of the paper and pencil measures (see Table 10). This is true whether or not our anomalous participant's scores are included, though her scores– especially on the PEBS– are highly influential. PEBS is less highly correlated with both LOC and SWL when her scores are excluded.

Table 10: Regression Coefficients for Relationships Among Different P&P Measures at Final Visit

Model	Dependent variable	Intercept	SWL Final	PEBS Final	F statistic	p	R^2	df	Notes
XVIII	Final LOC	2.06	.449 **		**7.64**	**.010**	.209	1, 29	All
XIX	Final LOC	2.28	.400 *		**6.73**	**.015**	.194	1, 28	No Ak
XX	Final LOC	1.60		.516 *	**6.53**	**.016**	.189	1, 28	All
XXI	Final LOC	2.05		.415 *	**4.25**	**.049**	.136	1, 27	No Ak
XXII	Final LOC	.839	.352 *	.381 ~	**5.93**	**.007**	.305	2, 27	All
XXIII	Final LOC	.874	.334 *	.295	**4.57**	**.020**	.260	2, 26	No Ak
XXIV	Final SWL	2.14		.383 ~	3.12	.088	.100	1, 28	All
XXV	Final SWL	2.25		.362	2.49	.126	.085	1, 27	No Ak

Final LOC scores are predicted by both final SWL scores and final PEBS scores alone. Higher scores on either of these other measures are associated with higher LOC scores, and this is true whether or not our anomalous participant's scores are included. However, Models XXII and XXIII, which try to incorporate both variables into a multiple regression model, show mixed results. Conducting a hypothesis test to determine the power of adding the PEBS variable to models that only contain the SWL variable (comparing model XXII to model XVIII with all the data, and comparing model XXIII to model XIX excluding the anomalous participant), we find that the addition of the PEBS variable is borderline significant with all the data (F=3.71, df=1, 27, p=.065) but not statistically significant if she is excluded (F=2.30, df=1, 26, p=.14). On the other hand, adding the SWL variable to the models that only include PEBS (comparing model XXII to XX, and model XXIII to XXI) yields a statistically significant increase whether including her (F=4.51, df=1,27, p=.043) or not (F=4.35, df=1,26, p=.047). These relationships could be explained if SWL and PEBS are correlated with one another because the variance that each explains would be at least partly explained by the other. The nearly statistically significant relationships found in Models XXIV and XXV confirm this.

Finally, we find a relationship between Δ LOC and Δ PEBS, shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Relationship Between Changes in P&P Measures

Model	Dependent variable	Intercept	Δ PEBS	F statistic	p	R^2	df	Notes
XVIII	Δ LOC	.094	.663 *	7.48	.012	.245	1, 23	All

Taking the results from Tables 9 through 11 together, we find a consistent relationship between LOC scores and PEBS scores—they are correlated at both our initial and final visits, as are changes in both these variables. The relationship between LOC and SWL is strong at our final visit, but not after controlling for PEBS scores, nor does it hold true across visits. Of course, because these relationships are correlational rather than causal, we could have used LOC to predict PEBS or SWL instead of the other way around. We have chosen to report these relationships this way both because the set of correlations are stronger with LOC and because LOC is, in turn, correlated with SOI, which is not true about the other psychological variables.

Thus, across data collection visits, Efficacy Beliefs seem to be related to Locus of Control, and these in turn are related to constructive-developmental level of mind, as measured by the SOI, though Efficacy Beliefs do not predict SOI directly. The relationship between Satisfaction with Life and the other psychological variables is mixed, arising at some data collection visits and not others, showing up in directions that are hard to explain theoretically, and often not strong enough to be considered statistically significant.

Summary and Conclusions

After conducting a reliability analysis for the three psychologically oriented paper and pencil measures we used in this study, we examined both site-specific differences in demographic and psychological variables and relationships among these. We found differences among our sites in demographic characteristics such as Age, Years in the United States, Years of Own and Mother's Education, and Parental Status and Number of Children. We also found a small number of differences among our sites in the psychological variables, specifically seeing slightly higher increases in both Efficacy Beliefs and SOI at Polaroid than at the other two sites.

In looking for relationships among these variables, we found that, of the demographic variables, only Mother's Education predicted SOI. Of the psychological variables, Locus of Control consistently predicts SOI (as does previous SOI scores), and we find inconsistent and confusing relationships between Satisfaction with Life and SOI.

Examining relationships among the paper and pencil measures, we find that Efficacy Beliefs consistently predict Locus of Control scores and more confusing and inconsistent relationships between Locus of Control and Satisfaction with Life scores.

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APPENDIX B

EFF Developmental Skills Matrices

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Read Critically

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
READ CRITICALLY		
• Focus is on literal meaning, concrete facts. • Looks for answers to concrete questions, new facts, agreement with own learned rules of right and wrong. • Emphasizes whether or not content gives facts, directions, rules. • Challenge is to be able to see general and abstract meaning.	• Focus is on author's general meaning, main points, what the expert says. • Looks for what the author/expert is saying and whether or not it validates or is in opposition to one's community of ideas or beliefs; looks to learn what one *should* know. • Emphasizes authority and expertise of author, wholly identifying with or rejecting author based on compatibility or not with one's affiliations. • Challenge is to be able to critique author or text based on own standards, pick and choose individual, personal points of agreement and disagreement with author/text independent of what the experts and authorities say.	• Focus is on gaining greater and more complex understanding, integrating new information into own system of knowledge and expertise. • Looks for multiple layers of meaning, expansion of and challenge to own knowledge and understanding. • Emphasizes understanding author's perspective in relation to one's own, examining what makes sense, what doesn't and why; need for understanding multiple perspectives in order to more fully understand the whole. • Challenge is to be able to set aside one's values and standards with which one's self is identified and invested in, and to embrace values, standards, and perspectives that are diametrically opposed to those one has identified oneself with.
CONVEY IDEAS IN WRITING		
SPEAK SO OTHERS CAN UNDERSTAND		
LISTEN ACTIVELY		
VIEW CRITICALLY		

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Convey Ideas in Writing

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
READ CRITICALLY		
CONVEY IDEAS IN WRITING		
• Focus is on communicating concrete ideas with concrete facts, rules, one's concrete goals. • Tries to communicate the right vs. wrong, concrete step-by-step process or description of the issue. • Emphasizes the facts; concrete reasons why one's idea is better than another, or is right when another is wrong; getting own concrete needs and goals met. • Challenge is to be able to convey general ideas and abstract meaning; to internalize one's audience, i.e., imagine how another will hear and feel about what one writes.	• Focus is on communicating to a perceived or imagined audience one's feelings, abstract ideas, self, or transmitting the views of experts or authorities, all for the purpose of connecting with others, belonging. • Tries to communicate abstract ideas of importance as representative of one's self in order to be understood, accepted, and liked. • Emphasizes agreement, acceptance, connecting with others through philosophical, psychological, or emotional ideas, loyalties, and identifications as defined by external authorities. • Challenge is to be able to separate one's ideas and feelings from one's need to be accepted and to belong.	• Focus is on expressing the complexity and independence of one's ideas to a specific audience for the purpose of being able to express oneself publicly and get feedback. • Tries to express complexity in such a way as to do justice to one's own sense of an issue, to raise questions, start a dialogue or debate, make oneself understood in relation to a wide array of opinions. • Emphasizes multifaceted nature of ideas and opinions, need for differing perspectives for the whole picture; independence, ownership of and responsibility for own ideas, opinions, and perspectives. • Challenge is to be able to not be identified with or invested in one's own written ideas and opinions, values, morals.
SPEAK SO OTHERS CAN UNDERSTAND		
LISTEN ACTIVELY		
VIEW CRITICALLY		

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Speak so others can understand

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
READ CRITICALLY		
CONVEY IDEAS IN WRITING		
SPEAK SO OTHERS CAN UNDERSTAND		
• Focus is on "telling it like it is" i.e., just the facts, with the sense that there is only one way to tell and understand a story or issue. • Tries to communicate just the facts and concrete details so that others will come to the same understanding as oneself. • Emphasizes that there is one right way to look at or understand a story or issue and one's job is to communicate that way clearly. • Challenge is to be able to recognize own perspective as one among many and to be able to speak to a wide audience knowing everyone will react differently to what one is saying.	• Focus is on communicating clearly through speaking to a known or perceived audience so that the audience will understand and accept one's point of view and be persuaded by it, agree with it and accept oneself as well. • Tries to connect with audience, whether one or many, to form a bond of mutuality and understanding. • Emphasizes connection with others and coming to a shared, mutual understanding and acceptance of an issue and of each other. • Challenge is to be able to formulate and express one's own ideas and opinions for their own sake, independent of others' acceptance.	• Focus is on speaking one's own ideas clearly and concisely so that they can be understood by a wide variety of people with differing perspectives and opinions. • Tries to speak so that complexity of own ideas comes across in such a way as to invite questions, discussion, dialogue, and disagreement. • Emphasizes audience (one or many) understanding one's points and perspective, not necessarily agreeing with or accepting them, but engaging with them in some way. • Challenge is to be able to present ideas without an investment in what happens to them or how they are received.
LISTEN ACTIVELY		
VIEW CRITICALLY		

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: Listen Actively

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
READ CRITICALLY		
CONVEY IDEAS IN WRITING		
SPEAK SO OTHERS CAN UNDERSTAND		
LISTEN ACTIVELY		
• Focus is on literal meaning, concrete facts and rules. • Listens for whether or not discussion or conversation meets own concrete needs and goals. • Emphasizes following the rules, doing it the right way, meeting own concrete goals. • Challenge is to be able to generalize.	• Focus is on general meaning, main points, emotional tone of what is said. • Listens for opinions of experts and authorities, confirmation and acceptance of self and self's belief system. • Emphasizes learning what experts say, accepting and following experts' guidance and wisdom, agreeing or disagreeing with experts based on compatibility with one's identified group of belonging, following the party line. • Challenge is to be able to take critical perspective on oneself and on the way in which one hears what one hears.	• Focus is on multiple perspectives and opinions, including theoretical, psychological, political, emotional; and the interaction and integration between and among them. • Listens for new ideas, challenges to old ideas, differing perspectives, conflicts, contradictions, multiple layers of meaning. • Emphasizes multiplicity of meanings and perspectives as necessary for whole picture; and individual personal responsibility for own feelings, thoughts, reactions. • Challenge is to see, in the moment, how the choices one makes for what one listens to and for automatically excludes other possibilities for hearing what else is happening.
VIEW CRITICALLY		

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: View Critically

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
READ CRITICALLY		
CONVEY IDEAS IN WRITING		
SPEAK SO OTHERS CAN UNDERSTAND		
LISTEN ACTIVELY		
VIEW CRITICALLY		
• Focus is on the concrete, literal meaning of the material. • Looks for display or representation of concrete facts, rules, steps to follow. • Emphasizes correctness of facts and information; and whether or not it is useful in getting one's own concrete goals met. • Challenge is to be able to see general meaning or trends and patterns in visual information, and to be able to apply the information to broader, more abstract issues or circumstances.	• Focus is on trying to understand what the presenter of the material intended to communicate. • Looks for abstract, generalizable information, and confirmation that one's interpretation is what the author/presenter intended. • Emphasizes generalizability and usefulness in helping one understand a particular issue and to shed light on similar issues or situations; trusts the authority to know/have accurate information. • Challenge is to be able to view material and critique its source, accuracy, and usefulness according to one's own self-constructed standards.	• Focus is on interpreting the visual information according to own set of standards as well as trying to understanding what the information is trying to convey • Looks for accuracy and clarity of display of information, biases of presenter and presentation, usefulness of information relevant to subject matter. • Emphasizes reliability of source, comparing information to other sources and displays. • Challenge is to be able to see the inherent worth of any presentation of data, regardless of (perhaps because of) bias.

DECISION-MAKING SKILLS: Use Mathematical Concepts and Techniques

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
USE MATH CONCEPTS & TECHNIQUES		
• Focus is on knowing the concrete mathematical steps to follow to get the right answer or to solve the problem. • Uses specific, concrete computations to apply to everyday necessities, i.e., price comparison, discounts, mileage, etc. • Emphasizes concrete uses to make daily chores and tasks easier. • Challenge is to be able to look for and use more general concepts and analyses for more abstract purposes.	• Focus is on understanding abstract mathematical concepts and being able to apply them to a variety of situations and to use them correctly. • Uses mathematical concepts and formulations as "external authority" to help make decisions. • Emphasizes using concepts and computations correctly, as one has been taught. • Challenge is to be able to take abstract concepts and put them to use to evaluate, interpret, and predict according to one's own needs and interests.	• Focus is on having a storehouse of mathematical concepts and computations to be able to use them at will to help understand and solve a variety of issues that arise. • Uses mathematical concepts to flesh out own ideas, questions, problems, make predictions about own ideas, business. • Emphasizes knowing what one needs to know mathematically for one's own interests and investments, as well as the limits of own mathematical knowledge and where to find information and help to fill in the gaps. • Challenge is to be able to recognize that, and in what way, mathematical concepts fail to address a particular situation or problem of interest; and to be able to expand or invent the mathematics to be a useful tool for that particular issue.
SOLVE PROBLEMS		
RESEARCH		
PLAN		

DECISION-MAKING SKILLS: Solve Problems

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
USE TECHNOLOGY		
USE MATH CONCEPTS & TECHNIQUES		
SOLVE PROBLEMS		
• Focus is on concrete definition of problem and finding the right answer to fix it. • Watches for self and others to find and follow the right concrete steps to the right answer, and to make sure it meets one's own concrete goals and needs. • Emphasizes one right answer and one correct way to get to it. • Challenge is to see the problem more abstractly and with more abstract solutions.	• Focus is on agreeing what the problem is and consulting experts for solution. • Watches for agreement among experts as to what the problem is and its solution, cooperation and mutuality between and among individuals in implementing the solution. • Emphasizes following experts' advice, trying not to offend anyone or hurt anyone's feelings, and coming to the right decision based on experts' advice. • Challenge is to tolerate and internally integrate conflicting views on the problem and conflicting solutions to it.	• Focus is on identifying multiple aspects of problem and identifying multiple solutions, highlighting pros and cons of each solution, and projecting out possible outcomes of each. • Watches for inclusion of differing and conflicting perspectives on both problem and solutions in working through issues. • Emphasizes the process of problem solving as important as the solution itself, and the process must include looking at all sides of the issue in order to come to the best solution. • Challenge is to welcome and embrace standards for problem solving processes that are diametrically opposed to one's own standards, for example a standard that does not value inclusion of all perspectives.
RESEARCH		
PLAN		

DECISION-MAKING SKILLS: Research

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
USE TECHNOLOGY		
USE MATH CONCEPTS & TECHNIQUES		
SOLVE PROBLEMS		
RESEARCH		
• Focus is on a concrete understanding and statement of the question and finding a concrete set of rules and steps to get the necessary concrete facts and information. • Works on following a prescribed set of steps to gather the facts needed to answer the question. • Emphasizes leaning new facts about something, learning a new set of rules and procedures to follow to increase the amount of knowledge one has. • Challenge is to be able to see the question in a more abstract way, that it isn't just about facts, but about gaining a new philosophical understanding of an issue.	• Focus is on trying to understand what the experts say about a particular issue. • Works to identify authorities and sources of information to gather; and to evaluate information based on philosophy and opinions of one's important affiliations. • Emphasizes finding the most authoritative and philosophically compatible (to one's affiliations) source to come to the best understanding of the issue. • Challenge is to internally generate one's own standards and values for evaluation, and to make recommendations and follow through on information based on internally generated interests and standards, regardless of agreement or disagreement with other important affiliations or authorities.	• Focus is on satisfying one's own multifaceted curiosity about a particular issue. • Works to state the issue and question clearly in order to be able to consider all aspects of the issue and to be able to gather pertinent information from all sides. • Emphasizes gathering as much diverse information as possible in order to come to the widest possible understanding of the issue, and then to make one's own evaluation of the information and follow up according to one's own internal standards and values and interests. • Challenge is to be able to identify with and make an investment in points of view very different from or in opposition to the perspectives one has deeply held.
PLAN		

DECISION-MAKING SKILLS: Plan

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
USE MATH CONCEPTS & TECHNIQUES		
SOLVE PROBLEMS		
RESEARCH		
PLAN		
• Focus is on naming concrete goals and setting the right concrete steps to get there. Goals are based on concrete needs and desires. • Works to follow correct steps and rules and make sure to do each one in the right way (there being only one right way). • Emphasizes following through on those concrete procedures and doing so in the proscribed manner. Deviation is experienced as doing it wrong. • Challenge is to recognize, accept, and be flexible enough to follow very different paths to reach a goal; to see the goal and the steps toward it in abstract terms with a variety of meanings and ways to get there.	• Focus is on realizing an abstract goal and figuring out best ways to achieve it. Goals are based on a sense of loyalty or obligation to another person or group or cause. • Works to follow guidance from experts or other authority re best way to plan for and reach goal. Looks externally for support, encouragement and validation of progress. • Emphasizes setting up a plan and steps to get there based on what the experts or authorities recommend. Successful achievement of goal is based on positive evaluation from others or other external measure. • Challenge is to independently create and use one's own goal, procedures, and standards for evaluation separate from and possibly in contradiction to, external experts/authorities.	• Focus is on identifying one's own independently conceived and desired goal(s) and considering all of the possible ways to accomplish it/them. • Works toward considering the multiple ways of achieving one's goal and deciding on which makes most sense to do given all of the complexities of the goal and of one's own talents and resources. • Emphasizes following one's own standards and values for reaching the goal, recognizing when and where one needs others' expertise and seeking that out. • Challenge is to recognize the relative and constructive nature of one's goals and plans, and to be able to pursue, with equal investment, goals that once felt antithetical to who one is.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS: Cooperate With Others

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
COOPERATE WITH OTHERS		
• Focus is on everybody doing the same thing, following the same rules. • Watches for own concrete needs and goals getting met as a result of cooperating. • Emphasizes self and others doing things the right way, following instructions and rules, with own concrete goals in mind. • Challenge is to value others' feelings and opinions in and of themselves.	• Focus is on making sure everyone agrees with each other, creating loyalty to each other and to the group's goals. • Watches for inclusion and acceptance of self and others. • Emphasizes mutuality, agreement, not hurting others' feelings, working together in identification with and in service of a larger group goal. • Challenge is to value and welcome disagreement and conflict as part of working together.	• Focus is on respecting differences of opinion, perspective, values; and working together to integrate each one. • Watches for honest and free expression of own and others' opinions; capacity of group or others to welcome and work with conflict. • Emphasizes making room for everyone's perspective and voice, valuing and learning from each others' different views. • Challenge is to relinquish investment in own standards for cooperation and to see that by holding the standards that one does, the opposite standards are called into being by the fact of their exclusion; and that cooperating means embracing diametrically opposed value systems and standards.
ADVOCATE AND INFLUENCE		
RESOLVE CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATE		

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS: Advocate and Influence

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
COOPERATE WITH OTHERS		
ADVOCATE AND INFLUENCE		
• Focus is on the concrete details of the issue, what is right or wrong, fairness according to a concrete definition of fairness: "I get mine, you get yours." • Watches for others following the rules and being fair. • Emphasizes doing the right thing, being fair according to a prescribed concrete set of rules and steps. • Challenge is to recognize and understand a wider range of fairness in addition to the emotional content of the issue rather than just the concrete issues and rules.	• Focus is on being attentive to the needs and feelings of others within a particular issue; feeling responsible for others' feelings and well-being. • Watches for being fair in a broader, more psychological/emotional way: are my/your emotional needs being met? • Emphasizes mutuality and loyalty to each other in the focus and presentation of issue and solutions. • Challenge is to separate one's feelings of responsibility for others' feelings from the issue; to be able to take a perspective on one's own participation and motivation in the process so that a wider range of issues and aspects of issues might be considered.	• Focus is on identifying the disparate aspects within the issue, prioritizing them, and deciding on the best strategy for a particular audience. • Watches for consistency and/or discrepancies in argument and whether or not intended group is being well-served by it. • Emphasizes presenting case clearly so it is easily understood by target audience, and strengthening case by listening and responding to range of feedback from positive to negative. • Challenge is to be able to step back from and let go of one's own sense of investment in any particular outcome or perspective; to be able to see the process itself as the most important part of the issue.
RESOLVE CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATE		

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS: Resolve Conflict and Negotiate

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
COOPERATE WITH OTHERS		
ADVOCATE AND INFLUENCE		
RESOLVE CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATE		
• Focus is on concrete identification and definition of the conflict, usually on who is right and who is wrong. • Watches for who is following the rules and who is not, whether or not one's own concrete needs and goals are being met. • Emphasizes meeting one's own concrete needs in a kind of tit for tat fairness. • Challenge is to be able to understand and recognize a more abstract definition and reality of conflict, that there are many ways to resolve it, that go beyond rules to taking others' feelings and needs into account as something important in and of themselves.	• Focus is on acknowledging the existence of and identifying the nature of the conflict and others' feelings about it. • Watches for commonalities and places of agreement that can be built on to decrease sense of differences and hurt feelings. • Emphasizes loyalty and inclusion of everyone and coming to a mutual understanding and resolution that everyone feels good about. • Challenge is to be able to tolerate and accept conflict within a relationship without feeling that it threatens the relationship; to see conflict as a necessary and helpful aspect of relationships and not necessarily something to avoid and get rid of.	• Focus is on articulating nature and vicissitudes of the conflict and the surrounding issues. • Watches for clear expression and acknowledgment of whole spectrum of issues and disagreement within the conflict. • Emphasizes potentially useful nature of conflict and the ways that conflict can clarify an issue and lead to better communication and relationship. Also emphasizes a resolution that takes into account the diversity of opinions and perspectives and feelings of everyone involved, and that will also move the interests of the group forward. • Challenge is to see the process itself as the main thing and let go of one's investment in one's own particular standards for how the process should move.

LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS: Take responsibility for learning

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
REFLECT AND EVALUATE		
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR LEARNING		
• Focus is on identifying concrete characteristics of own learning style and holding as definitive set of characteristics of self along with height, weight, religion, gender, etc. • Watches for concrete evidence of own learning style and how it "works" or doesn't work to get one's concrete needs and goals met. • Emphasizes using identified learning style to solve problems, justify why one can't do something; learning new strategies if other one's don't work to get one's needs and goals met. • Challenge is to be able to generalize, to apply idea of learning styles and strategies to wider and more abstract issues.	• Focus is on identifying own learning style according to the experts, in order to validate self and make differences between self and others ok. • Watches for abstract and confirming evidence that one does fit into a particular style, and uses that confirmation as the authority to help one work through learning issues. • Emphasizes identification with a particular style or strategy: "this is mine, this is me;" when strategies don't work, emphasizes lack of fit between task and learning style as responsible, and then seeks help from authority on what to do next. • Challenge is to be able to have and use own internal authority to generate new strategies for learning, to take responsibility for own learning style and strategies rather then depend on external authorities to identify, define, and support one's learning.	• Focus is on understanding one's own predominant learning style, it's strengths and limitations; and working to borrow strategies from other styles to enhance and strengthen one's own. • Watches for gaps in one's own style or strategy where one can benefit from looking to a new strategy or style. • Emphasizes taking charge of own learning by making sure one has the skills, knowledge, strategies, and resources available to educate oneself and get the necessary help where and when it is required. • Challenge is to be able to have and use and value strategies that are diametrically opposed to each other without feeling a sense of internal contradiction or dissonance.
USE TECHNOLOGY		

LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS: Reflect and Evaluate

LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
REFLECT AND EVALUATE		
• Focus is on a concrete and literal recounting of what one does, has done and will do and whether or not it is right or wrong. • Watches for whether or not one's concrete goals and needs are being met. • Emphasizes getting better at meeting one's concrete goals--learning better rules, getting better skills. • Challenge is to be able to reflect on oneself in a more abstract, psychological way in terms of one's character, and to be able to see and evaluate oneself through another's eyes.	• Focus is on reviewing oneself: who one is, what one does in the context of who and what one *should* be and do according to important external source of authority and expertise. • Watches for whether or not one is meeting the standards and expectations of important others, and how one is being evaluated and accepted by them. • Emphasizes being a better person as defined by important others (church, family, spouse, theoretical framework) and meeting their expectation. • Challenge is to be able to construct one's own set of values, standards, and definitions for who and what one is independent of what another thinks and/or expects.	• Focus is on reviewing and critiquing own actions, decisions, direction, and competence based on one's own set of standards, values, plans, vision, and one's sense of self within a larger context. • Watches for whether or not one is meeting own standards and living up to one's own full potential as one wants and defines them. • Emphasizes being more competent, expanding one's own choices and options, all within one's particular and varied contexts of life and work. • Challenge is to be able to relinquish one's identity with and investment in one's own standards, values, and sense of self as competent and in control, and to experience oneself as more process driven: as both created by and creator of the context.
LEARN IN NEW WAYS		